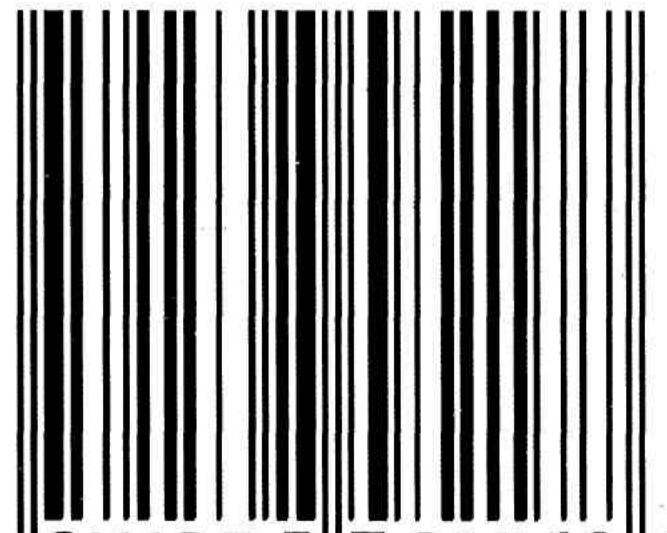


FAITH



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NEW STUDY@ANU

information coming soon

The updated Study@ANU 2006 website will be available September 2005

WHAT'S CHANGED?

The Study@ANU website is being upgraded and updated for the coming academic year. There will be more information and broader search functionalities, all designed to make it easier for you to find what you are looking for.

<http://info.anu.edu.au/studyat>

DIVISION OF INFORMATION



PARENTING ROOMS For Students & Staff



The University provides two new parenting rooms.

- Chifley Library, 3rd Floor
- Acton Early Childhood Centre, 22 Balmain Cres.

Features of this service include:

- Key card access for privacy
- Baby changing table
- Nappy disposal unit
- Privacy screen for breastfeeding
- Comfortable chairs
- Kitchenette

For information on accessing these new facilities please contact Equity & Diversity staff:

T: 6125 3352/6125 3868

E: EquityandDiversity@anu.edu.au

www.anu.edu.au/equity

amnesty international australia

Stop Violence against Women

Freedom Festival 05

Sunday 25 September

Ursula Rucker
Fin Malyer *Yvonne Tjanussela*

Ben Mono
Blaquereign *Jah'licious*

Bec Paton, Mikah Freeman, Sonaya Langley
Superbabe *@ Tilleys* *Wattle Street* *Buckley Street* *Lynneham* *Canberra*

Ashley Feraude & Cris Lucas

Tickets \$15

For online tickets, CD sales, artist profiles and full event details go to www.amnesty.org.au/freedom

Freedom from fear | Freedom from torture | Freedom from violence | Freedom from discrimination

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Woroni Volume 57

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We, the Woroni Editors, wish to acknowledge the Ngunnawal people as the original inhabitants of the land that our office is situated upon.

In its fifty-seventh year, Woroni is the official magazine of the Australian National University's Students' Association ('ANUSA'). The ideas communicated through articles and images printed in this magazine are not necessarily those of the editors or of office-holders at ANUSA. Woroni is published by the Directors of Student Publications for ANUSA.

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Thankyou:

Megan, Patchy, Aparna Rao, Tamera Russell, Don Malcolmson, Sarah Firth, Michelle Bond, Samuel Birbeck, Stephen Still, DSP, all of our contributors and our absolutely smashing sub-editors.

Fan and Hate Mail

Feel free to email us your words of reflection:
woroni@anu.edu.au

Joel Jenkins: the Next Arnold Jago?

I feel necessarily inclined to respond to my dear friend Anna. How are you my darling? It's a shame things got off on the wrong foot. I liked you and wanted to be friends with you. What a shame you are so fucking uptight that you refuse to answer my phone calls, what a shame, I wanted to talk to you. How fucking rude is it to just ignore a person, I am a fucking person, you do not ignore me you bitch. I wanted to show you a good time, I wanted to show you Australia and to meet some Australian people. Sure, I did want to fuck you, but that is all in good fun. Fun? Hmm... Sex is fun. Table Tennis is fun. Roller Blading is fun. I play table tennis, I roller blade, hmmm, and I fuck. Can't we enjoy the things we enjoy without guilt? Can't we have sex without the emotional bullshit? It seems we cant, well, it seems you can't. I spoke of an idea that I wanted us to embrace, an idea based on the values of free love. What a pity you do not think the same, I wonder if anybody thinks the same. Maybe my quest will be fruitless, maybe it is just not to be. I found it quite funny your persistent insinuations that I am a virgin. You were obviously trying to humiliate me, well it didn't work, it made me laugh. I know the truth, I have fucked chicks before, I'll even get my ex's to prove it. All is well Anna, I am not offended. We should catch up some time for coffee? Maybe a fuck? Oh and its nice to know you will be thinking of me when your having sex, though you should be thinking about trying to get your guy off, he might be a bit deterred by your rather large ass (I had to add at least one crass insult).

Joel

[Chloe: Rollerblading? Table Tennis? Fucking? For a moment there I was under the impression you were giving the study body an advertising pitch for Tampax.]

Alex Makes a Correction

Hello Woroni,

Please inform the readership of the following: In the start of my article in the last issue, the name 'Ronald Nozzick' appeared. No such person exists, although a kid with a rat's tail in my year 5 class had a name quite similar, I think. The person I was referring to, between amnesia and antonomasia, was Robert Nozick, philosopher and author of 'Anarchy, State, and Utopia'. Apologies.

Thanks,
Alex Douglas

Back-handed Compliment

Dear Woroni,

I write this still in a rather shocked state from perusing Issue 6. I absent-mindedly picked up a copy of the latest issue while dashing through A.D. Hope to get to a class, and - on opening it during a rather bland tutorial - fully expected to find another bewildering edition of nonsensical screeds, unreasonably anti-societal tirades, and far too many invectives written from a frighteningly bitter perspective. Yet as I read through this issue, my eyes boggled along with my mind: none of this was so. In truth, even for an issue about politics - which you couldn't interest me in if it was naked on a billboard outside my strangely designed college room windows - it seemed ... readable!

I don't know what happened - maybe you were tired of the hate mail; perhaps all the staff have been taken over by Pod People - but the unexpected rise in quality in the last two issues has forced me somewhat to reevaluate my views on you guys! So... well done, I guess.

Yours in astonishment,
Sam Yeo

Condoms and STIs: Not Political, Just Good Sense

Sex is enjoyable and a normal part of adult relationships. Whether people choose to have sex safely should, of course be their own and their partner's choice. Using condoms does prevent STI transmission in the majority of cases, and with the right technique, including using a water-based lubricant and the right size condom, they are at the forefront of preventing STIs. Condoms simply make good sense!

As the article 'The politics of contraception' says, even if you are using condoms and safe sex measures you should be tested for STIs. We agree. Chlamydia is the fastest growing STI, with 75% - 90% of people having no symptoms, yet testing and treatment for Chlamydia is simple. So, a yearly STI screen is important if you are sexually active, have multiple partners or are at all concerned you may have been in contact with an STI. Students can get tested for free through the SHFPACT Options Clinic, the Canberra Sexual Health Centre or the Junction Youth Health Service.

So let's get some stats on STIs and condoms which are real and proven:

- Chlamydia is the fastest growing STI and is usually prevented by the use of safe sex measures such as condoms
- Condom use is cheap, easy and effective
- Condom use prevents pregnancy and offers a barrier to STI transmission
- Oral sex can pass on some STIs, so condoms and dams should be used when having oral sex
- Studies have shown decreases with consistent condom use in all STIs including Chlamydia, Hepatitis B, Trichomonas, Herpes, Gonorrhoea & Syphilis

Condom failure is usually due to poor method, such as:

- Late withdrawal after sex
- Splitting due to long fingernails
- Not leaving a gap at the tip of the condom
- Not using water-based lube
- Using out of date condoms
- Using a condom which is too large

Safe sex is important for your health and your future. And testing for STIs is easy and simple. Why not use both for your sexual & reproductive health?

Carol Hart
Executive Director
Sexual Health & Family Planning ACT

It's All in the Numbers

Dear Woroni,

At ANU $3 + 3 = 4$. Two Three year degrees taken as a double degree equals four years of study. The university administration has recently come up with the idea of $4 - 1$. Where student will be automatically enrolled in honours and can choose to drop it at the end if they like. As opposed to the current system where student realise that they are about to graduate don't have a job or any other projects lined up, panic beg a lecture to let them spend the next year writing a paper on some obscure topic that no-one will ever read. Some taking the new system and combining it with the double degree system you should get $(4-1) + (4-1) = 5$? This is why I never attempted university level math.

Kim Johnston your friendly science fac rep.

NAB Smells Like ASS

Dear ANU (c/o Woroni),

To the National Australia Bank on campus: in case you haven't noticed, there is a parking shortage at ANU and all students are having to fight for a permit park everyday. So for you to put up a make-shift sign that looks like it fell off the back of a truck, telling all students that you have "reserved" a gravel space across Fellows Oval just so you don't have to walk, you lazy fucks – it's bullshit. And your bank sucks also.

Love Britney Lears.

Where's the Respect?

We've all had the obligatory bitch about Election Week, particularly those of us who've been 'preyed' upon in Union Court. Heck, for the first two years of my degree I avoided Union Court as if it were comparable to the bubonic plague during election season for fear of being spoken to about subsidised two dollar cups of coffee. However this year has been entirely different as I am now, almost through default, an active member of the Students' Association. Being stuck in the SA offices for numerous hours on end not only gives you an opportunity to fraternize with people you wouldn't under normal circumstances, it also allows you to become privy to the enormous amount of effort and work that is undertaken to ensure a certain quality of life for ANU students. I've heard, and indeed made those sorts of comments in my past; comments such as "Student politicians are a bunch of resume-building corporate brown-nosers with God complexes and penchants for power-trips". However, after this year, I know that these sentiments are anything but true. For the number of hours people spend in this building and for the amount of sleep sacrificed to organise events or draw up budgets, it is evident that this does not equate to one fucking line on your CV. The people that are working in this building are doing so because they want to, and because they care, emotive as that sounds. Ultimately they are doing this in an altruistic manner, to benefit students. So to blatantly tell candidates to "fuck off" is both inconsiderate and out-right discourteous. Nor is it particularly mature (or amusing) to make posters, personally attacking Aparna and her role as SA President. Not only is the poster ridden with poor attempts at humour, the underlying argument is also of questionable quality and lead me to wonder about it's creator's professionalism as prospective office-holders of the SA.

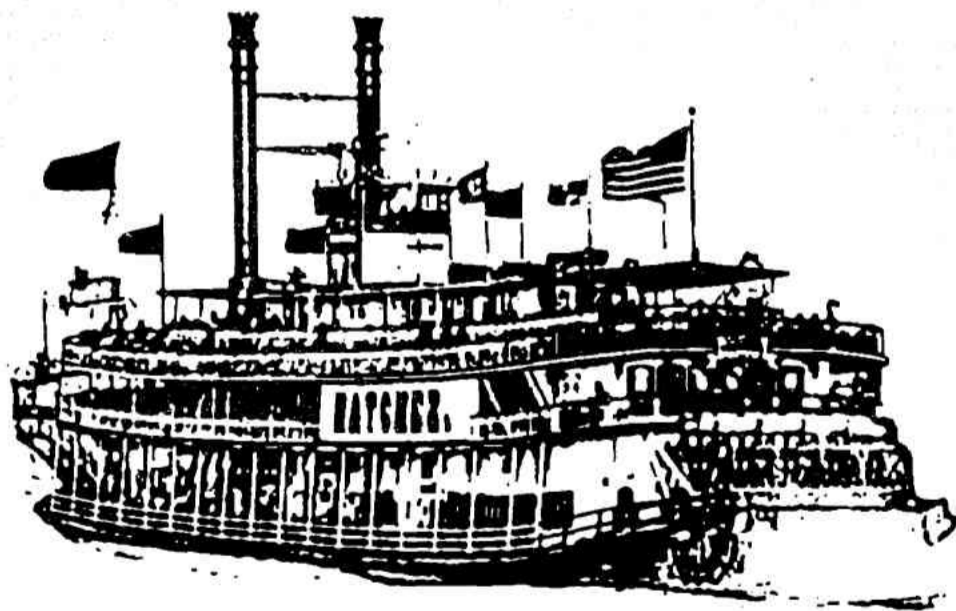
Chloe Persing

Editorial

Faith is what gets a lot of people through their days; whether it be religious belief or, like Hume, trust in everyday continuity. Something that makes the issue of faith interesting is when beliefs are presented with a challenge. With the advent of hurricane Katrina, many Southerners have come to question their faith. Undoubtedly this has been in a personal and Christian sense for many, but it has also affected the hurricane victims in a broader national sense. Many American citizens and commentators have been quick to criticise the President and Executive for not reacting sooner – and perhaps rightly so. It is perplexing that a Government so wealthy, and which identifies its culture with strength and might, could be so incredibly unprepared for such predictable devastation. But rather than focus on the obvious loss of faith in the Bush Administration, there has perhaps been a wider disillusionment with the nation's culture. The hurricane has reminded America that it is not an invincible power, and that unfortunately, many poor (read: black) Americans are more vulnerable to loss of liberty and justice than their fellow patriots.

We thought 'faith' would be an interesting, albeit controversial, topic to explore in our second-last Woroni (that's right, *second-last* Woroni). So please enjoy, and we'll see you on the mighty seas next time – arrrgh!

Love, trust and cuddly things,
Lucy and Chloe.



Issue Seven: Call for Contributions

Theme: Pirates

Articles and images must be received by 26th September (Monday week nine). Come talk to us in your best pirate accent because International Talk Like A Pirate Day is coming up soon, otherwise email us at woroni@anu.edu.au

Indies Confirmed in ANUSA Elections

By *Kate Woodward*

Results have come in from the Students' Association elections, held in week seven before the mid-semester break. The number of members who voted during the week was roughly around 1250. This is marginally down from last year's turn-out, which saw around 1450 people exercise their vote.

The Synergize ticket, a politically-independent conglomeration continued from previous years (formerly joined with Nexus), has succeeded in its bid for the 2006 SA Executive. Comprising next year's Synergize Executive is Laura Crespo (as President, who is currently the Sexuality Officer), Rebecca Thornberry (as Vice-President, who is currently the Debating Society President), Alex Purdon (as General Secretary, who is currently the General Secretary), Michael Atkins (as Treasurer), and Claudia Newman-Martin (as Social Officer).

The election of Departmental and Sub-Departmental Officers produced a variety of results. The heavily contested Education Office went to James Higgins (of both the Collective Endorsed and Unions YES! Liberals NO! tickets). Megan Leahy (of Collective Endorsed) won as Women's Officer, and the uncontested Sexuality Officer went to Rob Graf (of Collective Endorsed). There was no Collective Endorsed candidate for the Environment Officer due to a misunderstanding of the candidate application procedure, and the position went down to a vote between two colloquially-termed 'joke tickets', with the winner being Alessandro Antonello (of the Independence Party). Current Co-Disabilities Officers, Terri Warner and Carol Whitman, were confirmed for the position in 2006, as was the current Indigenous Officer, Candice Easter. All three ran as Independents and their offices were uncontested. The position of Woroni Editor(s) came down to one vote, which was initially discarded as invalid due to a tick and a cross appearing rather than numerals. The ballot also had a message scrawled on it. The office is has been acknowledged by scrutineers as going to James Robertson and Matt Laing.

The following people were elected as General Representatives to the Student Representative Council: Keiran Bennett (Unions YES! Liberals NO!), Helen Zhang (Pink Pantha), Toby Halligan (Synergize), Isabel Robinson (Synergize), Cat Coles (Synergize), Ellin Lede (Pink Pantha), Tom Roth (Pink Pantha), Matt Byrne (Keep Left), Beth Atkinson (Synergize), Desmond Ko (Pink Pantha), Will

Mackay (Pink Pantha), Kenny Chew (Nexus), Elizabeth L. Knox (Synergize), Evan Hynd (Keep Left). The Arts Faculty Representatives are: Pamela Gilbert (Synergize) and Lorna Clarke (Pink Pantha). The Asian Studies Faculty Representatives are: Arjuna Dibley (Synergize) and Emily Hogden (Synergize). The Economics and Commerce Faculty Representatives are: Tom McDonald (Pink Pantha) and Dave Edwards (Synergize). The Engineering and Information Technology Faculty Representatives are: Craig Gibbons (Synergize) and Matthew Smyth (Pink Pantha). The Law Faculty Representatives are: Jesse Kennedy (Synergize) and Sally Head (Pink Pantha). The Science Faculty Representatives are: Phoebe Moore (Synergize) and Saad Hafiz (Pink Pantha). The Delegates to the 2006 National Conference of the National Union of Students include: David Sykes (Pink Pantha), Toby Halligan (Synergize), Rachel Allen (Keep Left), and Tim Mayfield (Synergize).

Cram Left Red-Faced as Halls and Colleges Win Fight Over Fees

By *Andrea Scott*

In what was no doubt a slap in the face, the 2006 college tariffs which were approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research), Lawrence Cram, while acting as Vice-Chancellor, were 'unapproved' by Vice-Chancellor Ian Chubb due to a lack of consultation with the students involved.

The ANU Administration's back-flip is considered a win for halls and colleges that have repeatedly requested consultation on policy decisions that affect them, following last year's 'First-Year Guarantee' fiasco.

Presidents of the Halls and Colleges, ANUSA and PARSAN negotiated with Pro Vice-Chancellor (University Community), Penny Oakes, regarding the costs of upfront fees and Internet, laundry and phone costs. As such, upfront fees that college residents must pay have been dramatically reduced, while Internet, laundry and phone costs – all initially one off payments – will be incorporated into rent throughout the year.

Despite their victory however, complaints within the colleges continue as students insist the original hike in fees was yet another attempt by the Administration to implement the first year policy to its full extent – thereby transforming ANU's halls and colleges into little more than hotels.

News

ANU: "We want the money!"

By Sally Freidlands

The ANU Administration is now taking legal action against its insurance broker after years of waiting for a payout following damage to the Mt Stromlo Observatory in the 2003 bushfires.

The Administration is already in legal disputes with three insurance companies and has approached the ACT Supreme Court to ascertain the fair cost of rebuilding the Observatory.

Preliminary estimates placed the cost of damage at more than twenty million dollars. Four telescopes, the equipment workshop, an administration building and eight houses occupied by staff were destroyed. Sixty staff and twenty students were also affected by the loss.

Nearly three years after the fires, the ANU Administration is now suing its insurance broker for negligence. It claims the broker failed to secure cover for the Mt Stromlo site between the period of December 31, 2002 and December 21, 2003, during which time the fire occurred. The Administration also alleges the broker did not inform them of its failure to do secure insurance cover.

Mt Stromlo Observatory following the January, 2003 bushfires.

Ally Network begins

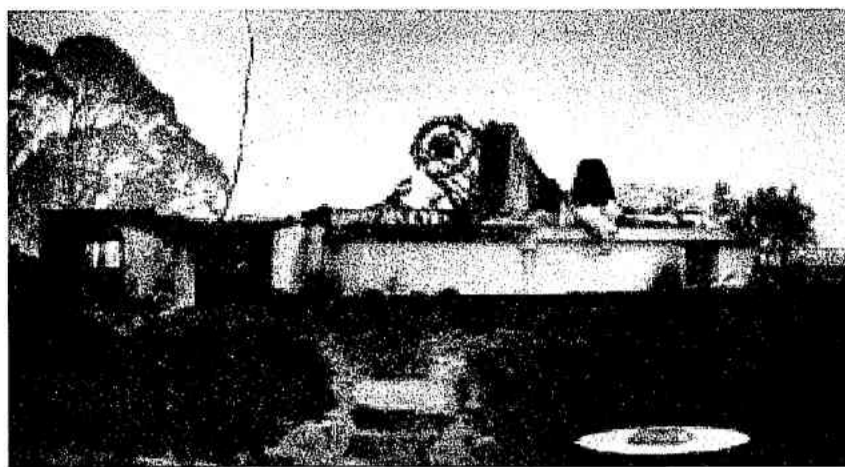
By Andrea Scott

In an attempt to decrease discrimination, harassment and vilification on campus, the Equity and Diversity Unit has created the Ally Network.

The Ally Network is made up of trained staff and students who are informed about, sensitive toward and understanding of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex (GLBTI) people, and their issues, and are willing to affirm their experiences and rights.

Dr Richard Stanley, an ANU Senior Equity Officer, believes the Ally Network "will help the University community to convey the welcoming and inclusive atmosphere that is necessary for successful and effective academic pursuits."

Allies will either post the Ally sign near their workspace or their details can be found at the below website. Allies currently work in such departments as DOI, Faculty of Law, Finance and Business Services, John Curtin School of Medical Research, Research School of Biological Sciences, University Executive and the Students' Association.



Above: the Mt Stromlo Observatory following the January 2003 bushfires

At present, only one residence – Bruce Hall – has trained Allies. Further information can be found at <http://www.anu.edu.au/equity/allynetwork.html>

ALP Changes View over VSU

By Harry Wenton

Student unions Australia-wide have had another setback in their fight against VSU with the Federal Labor Party's recent withdrawal of support for compulsory student unionism. Instead, Labor has agreed to back the Government's legislation on the condition that it introduces a service fee to fund facilities like childcare and sport. Only a few weeks ago Labor Party President Carmen Laurence was here in Canberra speaking to an audience of ANU students, lecturers and union members about the importance of compulsory student unionism. However, it would seem that a pragmatic approach to dealing with Government legislation has won out over party policy, much to the detriment of students.

Should Labor's proposed amendments to the bill occur, Liberal plans to introduce a user-pays system for all student services would be stopped. Similar to the Victorian model, services of 'direct benefit to the students' will remain subsidized by a general service fee, however, according to ANUSA President Aparna Rao "...activities such as those carried out by the Education, Sexuality, Environment and Women's departments will be impossible to continue... [and] the range of clubs and societies which are eligible for funding may also be reduced."

Similarly to NUS President Felix Eldridge, Aparna has acknowledged that Labor's pragmatic approach to the legislation is an effort to ensure that student services will not suffer too much under VSU, however, she also feels that "...the same effect could have been achieved by simply stating that Labor would support a compromise position on practical grounds, and not ideological ones."

Queensland Nationals Senator Barnaby Joyce's recent backflip regarding the sale of Telstra further bodes unwell for the anti-VSU campaign.

Careless Whispers

You gotta have Faith-a-Faith-a-Faith: a Careless Whispers think-piece

Careless Whispers remembers being six and accidentally smashing a delicate Pastel Peach Laura Ashley vase owned by one uber-vindictive bitch – our Auntie Alison. We wondered out loud: “how the Abblett are we going to get away with this?” Then we saw her, playing with her little dolls, and thus - we blamed Dawn. Dawn our culpable defenseless tard cousin – Dawn in those blood-red knitted guilty mittens. Dawn, locked in a chicken coop in the backyard Dawn. Dawn, get-out-of-jail-free-card Dawn. God bless Dawn – she needs it – that poor little bitch went through hell for us. She became a veritable poltergeist from that fortunate day on.

Looking back, maybe blaming Dawn so often was a teensy bit gutless on our part. But hey, at least we never stooped so low as to pop on a headscarf and stare vacantly at a Koran to clear our names. Then again, we never thought of it at the time. Then again, we had snake oil Dawn. Then again, we were never stupid enough to get busted for hoeing down on ecstasy in Bali.

Schappelle - you have a roommate! Welcome 24-year-old Australian model Michelle Leslie, who was arrested in Bali after police searched her imitation Louis Vitton handbag and found little pink pills emblazoned with the logo ‘15 years’.

But it was only when we saw the Les don a Muslim headscarf that our pearlene pumped lips parted pitter-pat and we started to really give a shit about her rather delicate situation. Was it a case of when in Rome, live like Romans? Or was her choice of head attire styled more for the media empire?

Call us cynical, but we’ve always believed that morality is shit if its not worn loudly for all to admire. Faith is the new white. When you’ve been naughty - whack it on, sell the sadness honey, and then, when back in Australia dancing freely at some shitty club, stuff it in your handbag and fill your sluttly little pout chockfull with heroic doses of ecstasy and man meat.

Not that Les is doing that – of course - it’s probably just a glaring coincidence. She is, after all, part devout Muslim - well, if you excise the cleavage popping extravagance of some high-profile earlier modeling jobs perhaps? Hypocritical? Probably. Smart move? Definitely. Would we do the samé? Absolutely.

Embracing religion to get away with a crime almost makes CW respect people who have religious beliefs again – al-



most, because unlike the Les-ster, we distrust their motives.

It didn’t work for the Sharpellaphant - but that’s because the silly girl picked the wrong religion. At least she can take solace that now she has the perfect mannequin to practice on with Jurlique-inspired therapeutic jail-toilet algae body wraps and facial scrubs.

And it’s all for four paltry kilos of marijuana and some fucking ecstasy tablets. Meanwhile, Courtney Love is a walking exhibition of contemporary heroin addiction and no one seems to care. Then again, she never tried to redeem herself by wrapping red string round her wrist. Like wearing canary yellow, faith is great when you are able to pull it off, but plenty have been left broken and bloodied in the attempt. Lucky you were born a model, hey Les?

Speaking of knowing how to hide an extra four kilos - Careless Whispers recently embarked on our bi-monthly Gwyneth-inspired detoxifying Ayurvedic fast. On the twenty-eighth day, having whipped ourselves into a Jim Morrison-esque shamanistic trance, we experienced a revelation: spirituality is cheap bullshit! Who needs peyote when you have speed, over exercising, and two perfectly otherwise-useless fingers? Who needs kabbalah when you have Ipecac syrup? After all, a successful diet is as exclusive as Scientology, can instil all the moral superiority of fundamental Christianity, and uses denial and repression as skilfully as any Catholic Father. In this fabulous world of celebexcess, dieting is the sparking new religion.

Some quick examples? Well, more redeeming than Jesus, Dr Atkins has resurrected many a flagging career. Ms Paltrow credits Dr Joshi’s detox and cupping regime with helping her find ‘true love’ in car commercial songwriter Chris Martin. Kirsty Alley’s own personal JC, Jenny Craig, can ironically be credited with all of Alley’s success as a Fat Actress. The list goes on and on - and when this religion welcomes in its own rapture in future decades we can’t wait to see Celeb Angels being lifted up into Heaven, and being vomited on by Karen Carpenter at those pearly gates, (actually, wasn’t that a Bjork film-clip?) Either way preciousses, for that spring-cleaned pure feeling, forget morality - take a leaf out of Posh Spice’s ghostwritten lifestyle bible and try laxatives.

A Life Less Hammy

Samuel Birbeck chews the fat with Ben Sakker Kelly on Jewish Life

Former President of the ANU Jewish Students' Society, Ben Sakker Kelly, was originally convinced to do this interview on the understanding that it "would be conducted by someone dressed as a giant ham hock." The once-planned Woroni Ham Mascot for 2005 was not to be, but the interview has gone ahead nonetheless, conducted by the only regular Woroni writer known to friends and enemies alike simply as "Ham". So please, kick back and enjoy this intimate journey into the mind of one of the nicest guys you'll meet of any faith - that of Mr. Ben Sakker Kelly, Jew.

What does it mean to you to be Jewish as a student at ANU? Do you encounter any problems because of it, or does it provide any benefits that may not be obvious to us gentiles?

Generally, I love being a Jewish Student at ANU. We've got such a diverse and interesting student body, and I've really enjoyed the opportunity for interfaith activities with students of other beliefs. For instance, we organised this awesome barbeque with the Baha'i Students' Society last year, which was also attended by Muslims, Buddhists and Christians. It was great!

There are only 300 Jews in Canberra which has its drawbacks. For instance a lack of wider Jewish community events, especially ones involving many other drunk, attractive Jews our age. That can lead to a lack of shtooting, as we call it in Yiddish. I'll let you do the translation.

For those of my friends who are a bit more hardcore kosher than me, they can only get their food frozen in shipments from Sydney every few weeks because there are no kosher butchers in Canberra.

But on the other hand, we get to grow up surrounded by the wider community. Being in an environment where you're always the 'token Jew' in a non-Jewish crowd really forces you to define what your Judaism means. Certainly out of the comfort zone on that front, which I think is a worthwhile experience.

It also has its downside of course; you encounter a few problems. I'm not one to yell anti-Semitism at the drop of a hat because I think it devalues the term, but there have been some occasions where I was pretty taken aback. We've had people walk up to our stall on Market Day and start yelling things like "you Jews have been bathing in the blood of Hitler for 50 years! When are you going to stop hiding behind it?" Other campuses have had "Jews:

the New Nazis" spray-painted all over the pavement, and there are other incidents I could mention.

A lot of the stuff we encounter is related to the political situation in the Middle East, sometimes coming from students and occasionally even lecturers. With our religious, emotional and personal connections to Israel, it hits home a lot more than for most students, who see it as just another political issue. I wouldn't describe that as a 'problem' for me as a Jew, because a lot of people just want a rational political debate (which is totally cool). However, sometimes that goes a bit overboard.

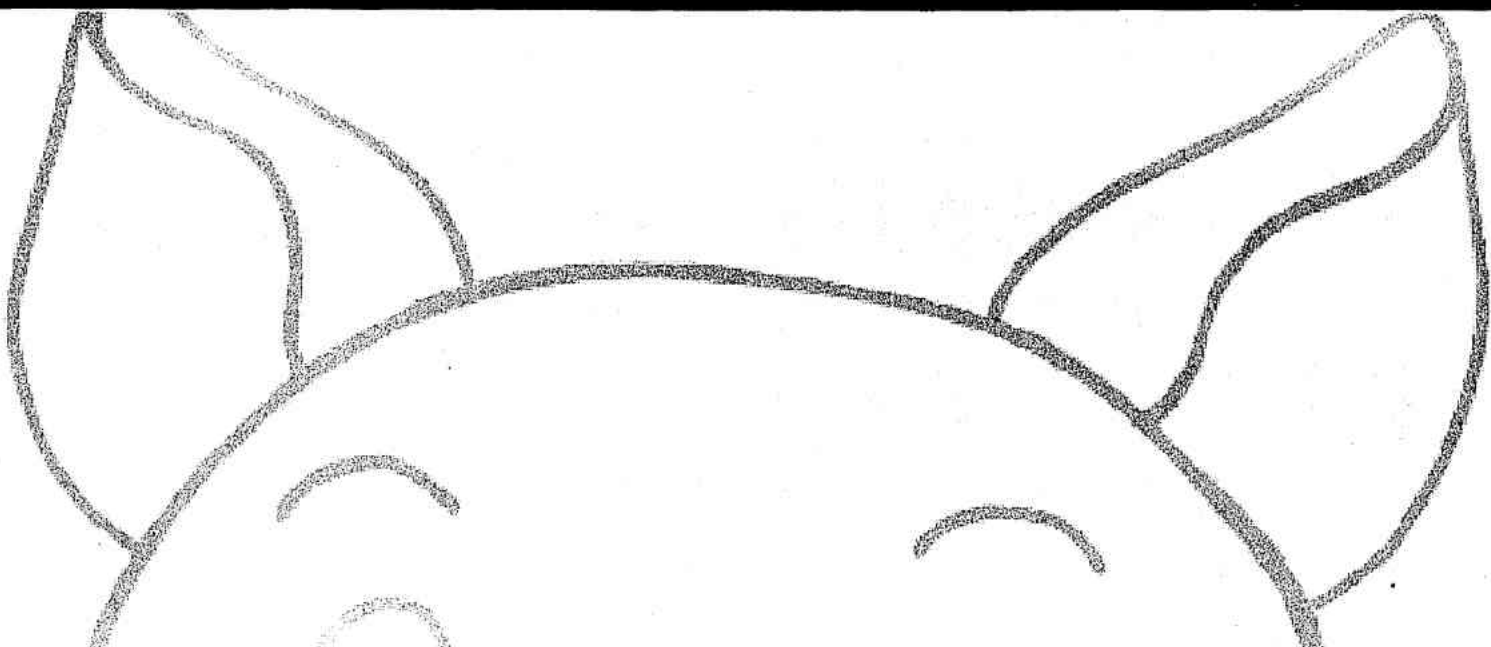
For instance, I once sat in a Middle Eastern Politics tute where a student claimed that Jews control a massive proportion of the US economy. He said that no US President can be elected without the Jews backing him, to which the tutor agreed. I find that a bit interesting since seventy-five per cent of American Jews vote Democrat, but hey - I guess we obviously haven't mastered the whole conspiracy thing yet.

For that reason it's sometimes a bit intimidating on campus. But I think most students out there are very open-minded, and we find a lot of non-Jews joining our society to learn a bit about Judaism, our views on Israel et cetera. Either that or for the free beer.

I would have thought that the worst thing about being Jewish would be missing out on all that tasty ham. As a ham aficionado, I wonder if this has ever caused you to question your beliefs? Have you ever been naughty and ordered a Hawaiian pizza?

My relationship with ham has been a long and fraught one, from the first unsettling discovery that my primary school hot dogs weren't made of the four legged animal I'd hoped they were, to the sometimes tragic need to turn down pizzas which have been ordered on midnight munchie runs. I'm a bit more lenient with a lot of the laws of kashrut (our dietary laws), and many of my more religious friends can attest to staring at me disapprovingly through the doors of McDonalds eating triple cheeseburgers with glee (mixing milk and meat is another big no-no).

However, like a lot of reform Jews, even if I don't adhere to anything else I will still say no to ham. Don't get me wrong, I love the critters, but I'm content to admire them from a distance rather than enjoying a more culinary relationship. I'm sure they love me all the more for it too.



Did kids at school ever tease you for not eating pork products? Kids can be so cruel...

I definitely had my 'wog boy' moments at school - especially during the fast of Yom Kippur (friends dangling various morsels and drinks in front of me enticingly when they knew I couldn't eat) or Pesach (Passover: we're not allowed to eat anything with yeast in it, including beer, for a full 8 days to remind us of how the Jews fleeing Pharaoh didn't have time for their bread to rise - try explaining that in Year 3).

Indeed the 'kids' I hang around now (otherwise known as my friends) have often been very sly about this. A few claim to have drunken photos of me in which they'd cleverly placed a 'beef' Hawaiian in position when I wasn't in a state to know any better, then gathered evidence during the act. "It's ok man, the beef is just cooked rare..." bastards.

At the same time, it's fun to be a real pain in the arse about it. I have a Hindu friend and whenever we go over to my Muslim friend's house, we can't eat beef or pork. Once we were there with a vegetarian and another person who 'didn't like the fruit', so she almost lost it. That was funny. She hooks into me all the time for not staying kosher enough though, so I guess my non-Jewish friends vary from unwashed savage to home-grown Rabbinical authority on the issue.

Moving back to the delicate subject of politics, what's your take on the recent historic events in Gaza? How do you see these moves playing out with regard to long term peace plans in the area?

It's certainly a very hard time for Israel and the Jewish people. In terms of personal connections, it's quite fraught. I have very close friends whose cousins, aunts and uncles have all been forced to leave their homes of two generations and start their lives anew. On the flip side, I also have a lot of family and friends my age who have to serve in the army, and who from now on will not have to spend long periods of time in Gaza being put in mortal danger.

I do support it overall. People have to understand that it's a very hard move, not only to relocate 8,500 people against their will in the space of only weeks, but also because of the way it's torn our community. This will be the last Jewish community in Gaza (after a few thousand years of uninterrupted existence, apart from a brief period in the last century). It is also the end of the road for those advocating

a 'Greater Israel' policy and those claiming the religious necessity of the land.

All of that has to happen though. Both Palestinian and Israeli nationalism must compromise to the extent that they fatally interfere with the others' existence - that is the only road forward for a two state solution. We'll see what happens, but most Israelis supported Disengagement and I think most will vote for further compromise if the daily rocket attacks and attempts at suicide bombings stop. Now it really is up to the Palestinians to prove that they will, and I'm a bit worried that a lot of their leaders seem to be talking about how violence achieved the Disengagement.

But eventually I think they'll have to give peace a chance, and Israelis will feel that this Disengagement wasn't a mistake. When that day comes, we can move forward even further than this great leap.

Finally, something to grab the non-politically minded reader's attention again: it's my understanding that Judaism has generally held a somewhat more enlightened attitude towards sex than traditional strains of Christianity. Care to enlighten us?

Yeah, we have it pretty sweet with sex. Judaism views sex as one of the most holy acts. Not just sex full stop though, but a real connection between partners on a spiritual level as well as a physical one. So I guess that differs a bit from religions which view it as a necessary but not so admirable thing, because we really do put it on a pedestal and encourage enjoyment, and fulfillment. Rabbi Shmuley Boteach has written a good book on it called 'Kosher Sex: A Recipe for Passion and Intimacy' so any people with a Jewish fetish should check it out.

In fact, under Jewish law a woman can divorce her husband if she's dissatisfied with the sex. Married couples are supposed to have sex regularly, especially on the Sabbath. And another funny but very little known fact is that a huge chunk of the porn stars of the 70s and 80s were Jewish, as are many today (like Ron Jeremy). So I guess that positive attitude towards it has a number of results.

One thing that goes around which I can dispel though: I know that quite a few people think orthodox Jews have sex through a sheet with a hole in it. It's totally untrue - after all, what fun would that be?

Conversion to Catholicism

By Patchy

"Both of them had fairly typical first years of uni, living in colleges, with plenty of partying, alcohol, and the usual hi-jinks, but as Kathy puts it, although fun, she was 'living these highs and lows' until eventually the lifestyle started to get her down more than she was having fun."

I recently individually interviewed two strong, independent and intelligent women, who have both converted to Catholicism during the course of their university degree. And no, before you start thinking it – it wasn't because they had the personality of toadfish or the appearances of the ugly stepsisters.

In fact, on meeting Jane and Kathy, you are struck by just how relatively normal they are. Both are into at least five years of study of combined degrees, and both are alternately funny, engaging and thoughtful in conversation. It would seem they both have a lot going for them; why then did they have the desire and impetus to follow through with a conversion to Catholicism - a religion that is perhaps only second pariah to fundamentalist Islam?

For Jane, who converted three years ago, the foundations were already laid. Having grown up in an Anglican family with a strong Pentecostal/evangelical influence, "heaps of happy clappy," as she laughingly calls it; her underlying Christian faith was already developed. The impetus for converting to Catholicism was that she eventually felt confronted by the lack of connection, saying, "it just didn't make sense to be Protestant anymore."

This apparent crossroad, in facing a life altering choice, is similarly echoed by Kathy. However, she differed in that she was not a committed Christian before university. Yet she too in exploring it eventually felt that it had been "building for a few months... it felt like I had to make a choice between the options out there..."

To rewind a little, it is not as if either of them easily waltzed into the decision to convert, as Kathy ironically stated, she didn't go "looking for God" as such. Both of them had fairly typical first years of uni, living in colleges, with plenty of partying, alcohol, and the usual hi-jinks, but as Kathy puts it, although fun, she was "living these highs and lows" until eventually the lifestyle "started to get me down more than I

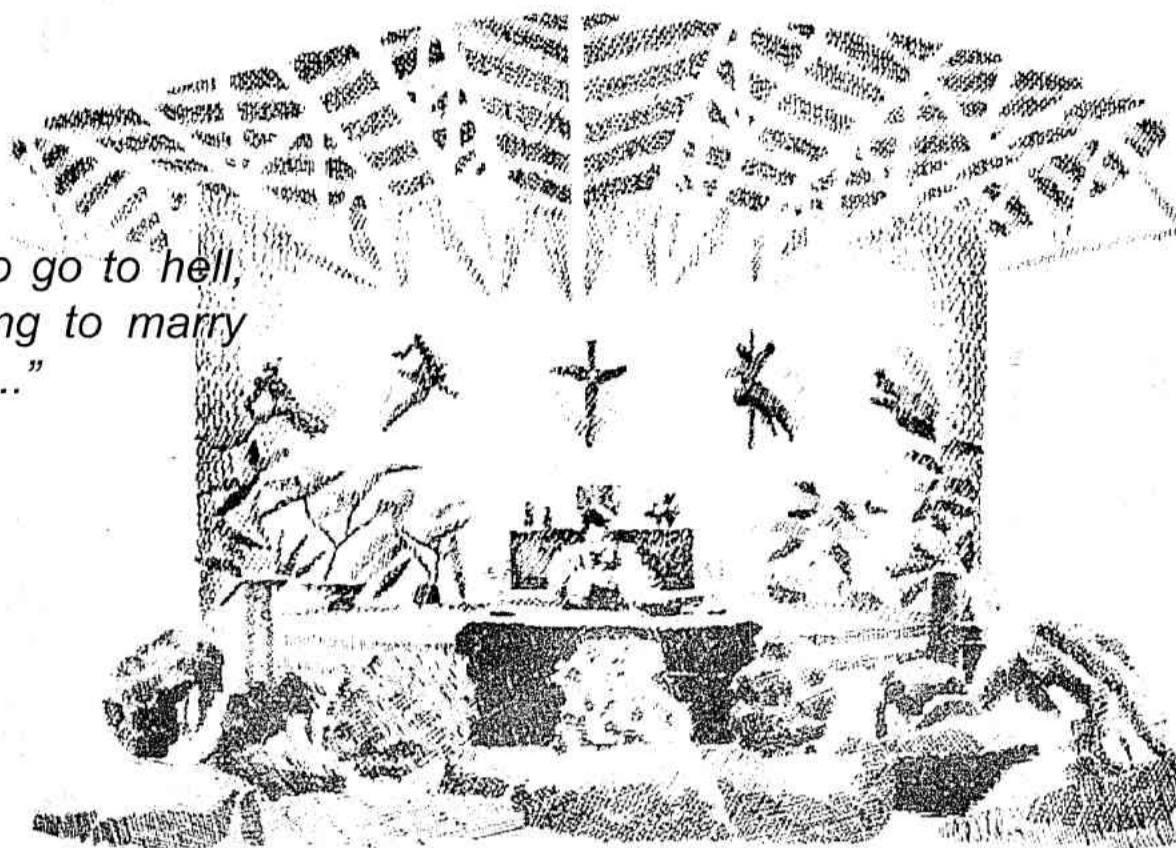
was having fun." It was at that point she decided to change it, to try and make it better.

Essentially, both of them reached a point where they started to search for a little more meaning amongst the chaos and self-indulgence of university. They asked a lot of questions, engaged people in debate and read books upon books. Kathy investigated Buddhism briefly but felt it was too impersonal, and wasn't something she felt compelled to pursue. Although already committed, Jane did not simply upsize her Christianity, she was able to make sense of it because she'd "gone through it in a philosophical way... if you believe in God at all... it makes sense – a being that knows and loves."

It is a point that both of them stress. Converting to Catholicism was the culmination of a serious theological, philosophical and personal exploration over a few years, indeed one that continues. Jane in particular had to grapple with the alienation she felt from her family: "Mum thought I was going to go to hell, Dad thought I was converting to marry Matt [an ex-boyfriend], my brothers didn't care..." But both are adamant they worked things out for themselves, and when they took on the mantle of 'Catholic', the Church, they understood what they were embracing. As Jane stated, "to maintain any integrity I had to know what I believed in and why."

Quite open about their endeavours (to at least try) to live by the Church's teachings, an almost audible sigh of expectation escaped them both, when separately, the conversation rolled around to sex. Unlike the stereotypical image, when questioned, both are quite relaxed and open about the topic. As Kathy candidly reiterated, her partying and crazy times involved "a lot of stupid, meaningless relationships that ended up hurting me in ways that did lend me to start... it was a part of wanting to live my life differently." Or as Jane quite humorously replied, "There's more talk about it than people are having, I know people less

*"Mum thought I was going to go to hell,
Dad thought I was converting to marry
Matt, my brothers didn't care..."*



religious who don't get any... celibacy is an active sexual state – it's not that I can't get some." It was not an area in which they felt repressed, rather, that the Catholic conception of sex was often misunderstood. Both appreciate the 'value' placed on it by the Catholicism, and saw it as part of a more holistic, meaningful worldview, of 'how the universe works'. Jane further suggested that perhaps society's seeming obsession with sex reflected a "desire for God." In that ultimately people desire to "be filled, and known and loved for your innermost being... you're not going to find that at ICBM."

In distinguishing Catholicism from other Christian denominations, a strong similarity emerges in the two with the physicality of the religion. Catholicism was not necessarily some 'airy fairy' movement of spirit, but more a decision and ability to use, as Jane said, the "action of the physical body to attain holiness and purity." The idea of the world as God's creation was fascinating to Kathy in the sense "that everything has been made so that in it you can find God."

The often popularly disparaged ceremony of the Church, or more particularly its Sacraments and the Eucharist, were central to this. Not only does it provide a sense of history and continuation for them both, but they are also a physical way of drawing closer to God. It certainly was for Kathy, who had previously held a lot of misconceptions, as she learnt and understood more, "Once I knew this... I couldn't back out." Alongside this for Jane, and echoed somewhat by Kathy, was the concept of self-sacrifice; that it was fundamentally about giving yourself over to God. Translated? That Catholicism is essentially about service to others, quite literally - where possible, feeding the sick and clothing the poor.

In speaking about these things, there is a discernable, quiet confidence that both exude that can be sourced from this religious framework. It seems to affect a real sense of purpose that is central and valued in their lives. However

they are not blinded to the faults of the Church, as Jane concedes, there is a lot of anger directed at the church, much of it "probably rightly so." Yet both have also found it difficult, and encountered certain levels of persecution, in this environment of hostility. Jane has personally grappled with a lot of irreligious people, ironically being less tolerant "because they dismiss religion as something stupid people do to make themselves feel better" and consequently often won't "engage in philosophical or theological thought."

Kathy made certain to point out how problematic it is when people assume that just because people follow a certain religious framework, that we "have it all sorted out and... think that everyone else is crap." On the contrary, she believes that in trying to live to this ideal standard, it was possible to know maybe "more than anyone how bad they are in themselves." For her, it naturally led to a deep tolerance and acceptance of others, and she hated to think people would consider Catholics as "proud or judgemental." Both are all too aware of their own fallibility, as Jane admits "I went through a stage last year. I wasn't very Catholic in sexual terms." As a result, both would never consider judging friends, or others, who may lead lives antithetical to a Catholic one. As Jane added, "I'm doing my best trying to maintain my own salvation... honestly, I don't care... I don't look at anyone and think they're going to go to hell... God knows their hearts... God is just – infinite justice and infinite mercy."

Regardless of what one may think of the Catholic Church, or its teaching, one cannot help but have respect for the journey these two have undergone, against the torrent of popular culture, to convert to Catholicism. A decision taken neither easily or light-heartedly; both have discovered new levels of peace within themselves and with the broader world. Certainly, they by no means have it all worked out, but for them, they have found a path that continuously inspires them to contemplate truth, to seek justice and to coherently and meaningfully live their lives.

To Have and To Hold: For as Long as You're in Denial

By Megan McKeough

"In the end though, the truth is that we do need marriage. We need it because we believe that children are meant to have a stable place to grow up, so we can believe that family is the one constant thing you can rely on."

In this brave new world of Red Bull binges, conforming non-conformists, *Jackass* enthusiasts and iPod supremacy, there's so little left to have faith in. While I will always retain my faith in chocolate, Harry Potter and the glorious art of bad cinema, marriage is about as far up on my list as George Bush and petrol prices.

Marriage to me is like a promise to meet up with someone in heaven – you do it to make yourself feel better about the future and it's not a promise that is tied to logic or reality. You could try and tell me that my cynical and borderline offensive views are a result of being raised as part of the divorce generation, but while my parents *are* divorced I believe that has nothing to do with it. I *used* to dream of the white dress, the flower arches and little netting sacks of candied almonds, but I also used to eat raw potato and drool on myself.

I suppose it's not so much marriage as weddings and monogamy that really grinds my gears. I understand that some people really do want to celebrate their eternal and everlasting love on their 'special day' in a cloud of obnoxious white with specially-trained thousand-dollar doves flying overhead. But when you see a bride throw a tantrum because the roses are the wrong shade of red and the mullet-wearing 80s tribute band doesn't know her favourite Dire Straits song, you wonder where the love really is.

Right about now I could converge into the usual feminist opposition to marriage and weddings – the 'giving away' of the bride from one man to another, like some sort of prize goat auctioned at a county fair. The original purpose of the wedding ring as a symbol to 'bind' the woman to the man, as 'man and wife', a symbol of control sort of like a dog collar. Instead, I'd like to use a food analogy.

You might really like chocolate ice cream. Let's say you even love chocolate ice cream, it's your favourite of all the flavours, even though there's plenty of other flavours in the ice cream shop. Now imagine having to eat chocolate ice cream every day for the rest of your life, and when you're not eating the said ice cream, people are asking how it's

going and wondering where it is that night. After 20 years of solid chocolate ice cream consumption, wouldn't you be even a little sick of it? Wouldn't you want to search for new flavours? Couldn't you maybe even grow to despise chocolate ice cream and never want to see it again?

What I'm trying to say is, no matter how much you want to be with someone, I just don't think monogamy is logical. It's something we force on ourselves because we want it, because as humans we search for comfort and love, and if we think we can get it in one place for a long time, well all the better. An ill-placed faith in marriage and monogamy is what leads to cheating, when the affection fades and everyone is just too stubborn to believe it. Nothing stays the same forever. In my cynical opinion, you can't love the one person for the rest of your life, if you even love them to begin with. We change so much over the course of our lives, how can we believe that one person is going to suit us through our many phases? It's all up to how you read it. Relationships don't have a 'use by' date *per se*, but they do have a 'best-before'. Some people recognise when things are going sour, but others push on until there's nothing even left to save.

In the end though, the truth is that we *do* need marriage. We need it because we believe that children are meant to have a stable place to grow up, so we can believe that family is the one constant thing you can rely on. We need it to convince ourselves that one day the search will be over, and that you only need to look a short while for eternal happiness, and after that, you can stop looking.

I don't mean to offend anyone who lays faith in the warming coil and soothing sanctity of marriage. I just don't believe in it. But people *should* do what makes them happy - I like seeing people gaze into each other's eyes in the first dance (to the *right* Dire Straits song) and really believe that they'll be together forever. I know one day I'll probably do that and really believe that from now on I'll always be happy. But I think the truth is that it will so rarely last as long as you think, and that's sad because our culture makes us expect it to.

Heaven's Gate: Cults and the Power of Faith

By Claire Low

"Jones had promised his followers an idyllic refuge, a socialist, non-materialistic haven. What they got instead was essentially a concentration camp in a jungle, complete with armed guards, torture, tranquilizers, sleep deprivation and insufficient food and water."

Nothing shocks the world quite like a brutal, mass killing. However, just as shocking was the deliberate, willing and peaceful deaths of 39 adults who had eaten applesauce mixed with Phenobarbital, then rested on bunk beds with plastic bags over their heads to assist them in dying. Their decomposed bodies were discovered by Deputy Sheriff Robert Bunk on March 26, 1997.

The Heaven's Gate cult suicide is one of the most infamous examples of cult activity in American history. Charismatic cult leader Marshall Applewhite convinced his followers that their deaths would lead them to a spaceship following the Hale-Bopp comet, and would carry them to a higher plane of existence.

Applewhite and a former nurse, Bonnie Nettles, came to believe they were earthly incarnations of aliens millions of years old. Furthermore, they believed that they were mentioned in the Book of Revelation and sent to earth to "harvest souls." Nettles died of cancer in 1985, and Applewhite convinced his followers that she had gone on before to "get things ready."

His followers had adopted his apocalyptic dogma. They all lived in a mansion and ran a website programming business. As a sign of giving up their individuality and adopting the cult's identity, they all wore identical clothing: black long sleeved shirts and black track pants, with Nike sneakers. Applewhite encouraged celibacy and the belief that the higher plane was genderless. Therefore, males and females had identical buzzcuts and the males, including Applewhite, were found to have been castrated.

People tend to dismiss cults as the result of religious fanaticism, craziness, or the bizarre hold of a leader over a mass of ignorant, emotionally needy and naïve followers. However, it is not that simple. People who join cults do so for a variety of reasons, but often they are simply looking for meaning in their lives. Intelligent, educated people can and have joined cults, failing to see the potential dangers of quasi-religious and quasi-political groups as they become more deeply involved in them.

Cults typically involve rigorous discipline, special diets and routines, and the withdrawal from mainstream society to

cultivate dependence on the leader and the loss of the individual's sense of self. Having achieved this, the leader then exerts control over his follower's thoughts and behaviour.

Cults began to proliferate in America in the 1960s as a response to the political, social and sexual revolutions of the time. Since then, and to this day, cults have appealed to a certain type of person: one who is frustrated with the way things are, hungry for change, confident of the potential for human perfection and eager to believe a single truth. Religious idealism leads to blindness towards how destructive the cult behaviour can be.

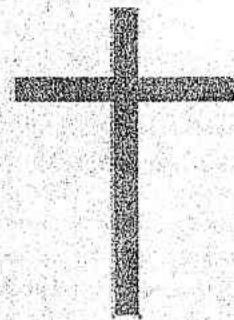
Another famous example of cult behaviour is the Jonestown mass suicides. Under the leadership of Jim Jones, over 900 followers of the Peoples Temple killed themselves by drinking cyanide spiked Flavour Aide in Jonestown on November 19, 1978.

Jones had promised his followers an idyllic refuge, a socialist, non-materialistic haven for people at a time when such a community was very attractive. What they got instead was essentially a concentration camp in a jungle, complete with armed guards, torture, tranquilizers, sleep deprivation and insufficient food and water. Misguided faith had trapped hundreds of people against their will.

Jones has been described as a good man gone bad, who led his followers astray. A well respected member of the wider community, he was in fact raping younger members of his church, stealing money and faking healings to impress his followers. Jones also allegedly murdered those who tried to flee his temple.

The First Amendment guarantee of freedom of religion in the United States allows many cults to hide from the investigations of authorities until the cult is blatantly destroying lives. People have suggested that the state needs to take a greater role in monitoring and regulating groups that claim to be churches, and definitions need to be put in place over what a church can and cannot do. The Heaven's Gate and Jonestown suicides need to be remembered, not simplistically as freakish aberrations, but as examples of what out of control faith can do.

Jesus Inc.: Making Money From Faith



By Rachael Kendrick

When Hillsong topped the ARIA charts last year it unnerved a large part of secular Australia. No one goes to church anymore, right? No one cares enough to, like, actually buy records full of hymns and prayer songs and whatnot, and if they do they're clearly old and humourless and highly unattractive.

This isn't a piece about how church and faith and spirituality are, like, totally cool and hot right now, nor is it about my main man JC and how he's the best accessory your life can have, because... no. I was raised Catholic but adhere now to no religion save the Temple of Jim Waley's Pants, but it's impossible to ignore the rising commercial success of faith of all kinds. It's a far cry from the grim suburban churches of my youth, where the leatheroleum covers of the bibles reeked of benzene and contained the occasional faceless, fingerless illustration of a 'Figure in Simple Garments Praising The Lord', as, indeed, we all should. To my mind the good Christian was like those simple little drawings – bland, happy, but completely without personality. Or eyes. Or nose. Or mouth.

The website of the Hillsong church (www.hillsong.com if you want to check it out) tells a very different story. Pastors Brian and Bobbie Houston have personality, even if, personally, I find that personality mildly creepy. Clear-skinned, bouncy-haired and toothy Brian and Bobbie are a deeply committed married couple who steer their Hillsong t-shirt-clad flock through troubled modern waters, advising them on how to 'Make Wise Decisions and Embrace Womanhood'. And, lookit, you too can experience Brian and Bobbie in the privacy of your own home with CDs of their sermons (only AUD\$22!). And we can't forget the astonishing success of Hillsong's music, which has ridden on Darlene Zschech's blonde shoulders all the way to the top of the ARIA charts and notoriety.

Darlene's saintly voice was oozing from the speakers at Koorong, a Christian superstore on the fringes of Fyshwick. At least I think it was, as her face was plastered all over the music section of the store. Koorong is a sort of Christian Dymocks slash Amazon that was opened all the way back in 1978 and blossomed over the years into a nation-wide franchise. Their website is neat and professional, the Fyshwick store as bright and clean as any other large chain bookstore in the country, and everywhere book titles urge

you to Live Life with Purpose while Darlene sings sweetly in the background. For someone without particularly religious beliefs it's unsettling, but I can see how the store has been so successful with the Christian community.

I spoke with the manager, Rob Brewer, about the success of the store. He explained that the store was something of a destination for local Christians, who went there for the startling array of Christian music, books like Purpose Driven Life, and bibles designed to co-ordinate with any outfit. Koorong seems to be more than just a bookstore; it's designed to sell a complete Christian lifestyle, where kids can get their Veggie Tales, teenagers can get their MXPX, and adults can buy guides to good Christian marriage and parenting. Not that everyone is completely happy. "Sometimes customers will complain, saying what are you selling this for?" Rob told me. "So it's always a bit of a battle, because not everyone's beliefs are exactly the same. So some of them might not agree with one author, or might not like the style of music." But he agreed that interest in the church is booming. "Just judging by society as a whole there seems to be a lot of people getting back into it. I mean, the Hillsong's a classic example, the Pentecostal churches are growing so that's making a big difference. A lot of people that weren't going to a church are now getting involved, back into it through the Pentecostal churches."

If interest in the church is booming, then so too are the commercial gains to be made from this growing niche market. However, I still find myself asking the question, why this new, Cosmo-ish makeover for old time religion? Is it a matter of survival? Is faith just so dissonant with the contemporary world, so irrelevant, that they have to dress it in the garb of modernity and make flashy promises of eternal salvation and a never-ending supply of friends who won't try to touch your goodies in order to bring people back? Or, in these increasingly complex times, where the gap between rich and poor yawns wider day by day, where everyone is screwing everyone else but no one cares, when the most powerful nation on earth can be whipped into an uproar about Janet Jackson's nipple but ignore poor people dying on the streets of New Orleans, is faith the best way of staying sane? When there's little to hold on to in a post-post-modern, post-MTV, capitalist world, does faith provide a vital toehold for those who need it?

"However, I still find myself asking the question, why this new, Cosmo-ish makeover for old time religion? Is it a matter of survival? Is faith just so dissonant with the contemporary world, so irrelevant, that they have to dress it in the garb of modernity and make flashy promises of eternal salvation and a never-ending supply of friends who won't try to touch your goodies in order to bring people back?"

Truth be told, I don't entirely buy either argument. Try as you cool atheist kids might, God and the people who believe in the entity sometimes known as God (ha, take that gender-specific pronoun!) aren't as stupid as you like to think. I once saw a documentary about astronomer Jesuit priests, and one of them explained that most of us only learn about science or faith up to the age of ten, so most of us have a ten-year old's understanding of God. I'm very willing to cop that, and request that the sniggering atheists in the crowd stow it for a few more paragraphs. But I also don't think the world is any more or less chaotic now than it has been in the past what with chaos having a way of catching up with all who try and avoid it. So, I don't think the church is either trying to dupe people into coming over to the dark side, nor do I think we're a collection of disoriented stragglers looking for sanctuary.

So, what's the deal? Looking around Koorong I few dry biblical tracts and no dyspeptic-looking nuns gazing heavenward, no bleeding saints or paintings of Jesus pointing to his glowing heart. What I did see were dozens, if not hundreds, of guides on how to live a better life. One title, *No Perfect People Allowed*, caught my eye. I read the blurb and it said how there was so much pressure in the contemporary church to be a perfect person with a perfect life, it didn't really leave room for the mistakes everyone makes. I'm not sure which is worse in terms of guilt – a Saint Augustinian treatise on the sins of the flesh and how your immortal soul is already going to rot in hell unless you repent, sinner; or a book on ideal Christian parenting gently reminding you that if your children grow up to be less-than-ideal it's probably because you didn't really try hard enough.

In this way, the new hip church is not so different from any other orthodoxy in our society, from the Atkins cult condemning your sinful love of bagels to Cosmo urging you to please your man. We're all expected to be perfect, and if I may be permitted to get my preacher on, isn't there a little of Hilary Faye, the shrill blonde Pharisee from the brilliant satire 'Saved,' in all of us? In some way aren't we all screeching 'I am filled with the love of Christ!' while pulling someone's hair?

Of course, Christianity isn't the be-all and end-all of faith and spirituality. There are many other avenues to God, or whatever you'd like to call it, and everyone from Madonna to Richard Gere are getting down with the Dalai Lama, twisting themselves into yogic serenity and tying one on with Kabbalah. To that end I visited The Hierophant, a fragrant hobbit hole of a store above Griffith Shops. The Hierophant has catering to the esoteric, the spiritual and the homeopathically inclined in Canberra for 17 years, and I spoke to manager Rovaye Hobbs about the curious souls who find their way there.

She told me the interests of her customers were wide-ranging, from Buddhism to Jungian philosophy. "People [come here] looking for music, books on different traditions, we have a very small Christian section, but people that come here are tending to look for Buddhism, Hinduism, a little bit of Islam, the concepts of meditation... connecting to the goddess energy, women trying to connect with themselves on a more female basis... people are trying to find themselves in the centre of chaos." She felt people now are more overtly seeking a greater meaning in their lives, and encourages people to sit and read in the store.

Certainly, The Hierophant feels much less urgent than Koorong. Rather than trying to shoehorn customers into a particular spiritual special interest group, customers are allowed to take things at their own pace. "I think [people] realise that the material world is not the be-all and end-all, and I think a lot of them have been disillusioned by Christianity, or it doesn't have the essence of what they're looking for. So, they explore other traditions."

Do the customers of The Hierophant have a shopping cart approach to faith, picking and choosing what they like without really committing? Is this a bad thing? Is there anything wrong with people exploring beyond the material until they find something that resonates?

This little non-atheist, non-Catholic has no answers, but I do know that if you're going to cash in on God now is the time. And I can surely tell you my Church of Jim Waley and latter-day Newsreader shrines and altars are doing brilliantly on Ebay.

Missing Faith:

Why is Pessimism Such a Bad Thing?

By Melissa Pilkington

"I can't see any positives when Armageddon is swiftly approaching, especially as believers destroy survival items, provoke fights, and predict the occurrences of completely implausible events; all when they could have simply gone to the pub like Arthur Dent in The Hitchhiker's Guide."

I believe in Ice Magic. I have complete faith in my peppermint flavoured chocolate Ice Magic that, if I wait a few moments and don't delve into my cold creamy dessert of pure goodness prematurely, it will set hard, and I will be able to delicately lift off the shell of chocolate and nibble at it, before starting the process all over again until my ice cream has completely melted. I can rely on this. It is my metaphorical rock. Every time I engage in this process it happens in the exact same way. So why do so many people have faith in things that aren't nearly as reliable?

Supposedly, we all need something to believe in, something vaguely bigger than Ice Magic setting, or if you don't have a sweet tooth, two minute noodles actually being ready to eat in under two minutes. So why do people choose the big things to believe in - religion, spirituality, astrology even? I can't understand why our faiths have to be so complicated and why more people aren't content with believing in the simple little things in life; the mundane features of our humdrum existence. Why create a larger, more convoluted world where the creation of you isn't necessarily the best idea? As soon as you think this, you adopt something that isn't tangible; something too big for you; something, by its nature, you will never be able to completely fathom.

Religions or beliefs may be entirely welcome, but sooner or later most people question their faith. Those who come through this period often believe their faith has in fact been strengthened, yet I can't help but think that if people didn't have a deep faith embedded in something intangible in the first place, they wouldn't have anything to lose (and there is quite a lot to lose, such as feeling lost and overwhelmed once having lost a source of guidance and comfort). If something really deserved our faith, wouldn't we independently make positive assumptions about it and not even let it enter our minds that such a thing might fail us? We would not even let it enter into our minds that the Ice Magic might remain runny like chocolate topping (the poor man's Ice Magic).

Maybe avoiding doubt is impossible, short of a world where we are unable to even question our 'beliefs'; where we either believe in something entirely or not at all. And perhaps there are little benefits to this ideal, which is only backed up by a rather pessimistic attitude: if you can't rely on something one hundred per cent, then you can't rely on it at all. Yet it is a popular attitude, because after all, it provides little room for disappointment.

Having faith does not rely on logical or empirical proof, which as far as I can see, is not really a good thing. Faith can become the origin of cults, the impetus for suicides, homicides, genocides, and terror. For example, as the year 2000 approached, there was a sudden flurry of millennial cults believing that the world would end when the clock ticked over on that supposedly fateful New Year's Eve. I can't see any positives when Armageddon is swiftly approaching, especially as believers did things such as destroy survival items, provoke fights, and predict the occurrences of completely implausible events; all when they could have simply gone to the pub like Arthur Dent in *The Hitchhiker's Guide*. It only takes a brief moment of flicking through the newspaper to see that religion, and thereby faith, causes many problems in the world.

Despite all of these ideas, it is obvious that being religious can have its benefits and the non-believer might even find themselves jealous of those who have the support and guidance of a religion behind them. The positive aspects of religion can not be denied when you can so easily observe the encouraging effects it can have on a person's morality, the good deeds and admirable efforts of different religious denominations around the world, and the comfort it can offer people in times of suffering or fear - especially where death is concerned. Although it can be a source of iniquity, religion, and faith, can encourage human solidarity, peace, and, probably most importantly, hope. So perhaps the best way to hedge your bets is to cling instead to tiny everyday expectations which will inevitably be fulfilled; expectations that don't rely on something you can't see or touch.

Diva Worship

By Adrian Brown

"But what exactly is a Diva? What makes them so appealing to gay men? And why don't they ever use their last names?"

Ever since the time of Cleopatra, Dido and Boadicea, there has existed strong, powerful women who not only held their own in a male dominated society, but still managed to look fabulous at the same time. These were the original Divas. And almost as frequently, Divas have inevitably been followed by a fawning cheer squad of gay admirers. You go, girl!

But what exactly is a Diva? What makes them so appealing to gay men? And why don't they ever use their last names?

The Diva

The Diva is a notoriously rare and precious species. It is also exclusively the domain of self-empowered womanhood. Males need not apply; unless they undergo genetic reassignment surgery and perform a song on Eurovision. A creative ability, such as singing or acting, is also crucial for success.

Job Requirements

In addition to such tasks as charity openings, concerts and indulging in activities that allow such words as Romp, Tragedy, Crisis and Shock to be used gratuitously by gossip mags, divas must also act as irreverent role models for the gay community.

For it is gays, more than any other group, who buy their albums, see their concerts, discuss their styles and keep them in business. Their patronage is enormous, yet fickle. If crossed, gay support can crush a Diva just as quickly as they're lauded as the Next Big Thing. Remember Kate from Big Brother, anyone?

One school of thought suggests that, as a marginalised group, gays find solidarity and self-affirming support in the symbolism of women struggling against a domineering patriarchal system. Another school suggests that, like moths to a flame, gays are instinctively attracted to glitter, feathers and drag choreography. In any case, gay men and Divas are linked as closely as Bette Midler's hand to a bagel.

Diva Warfare

Like everything else, Divas are a product of the market system, and must compete bitterly for their right to survive.



And just like politicians, it is usually the nastiest, bitchiest and, occasionally, the most talented who survive. It is thus that Diva rivalries or factions develop.

Some of the most prominent include:

Madonna versus Madonna: Mother of God and original Catholic Diva versus megalomaniac mother of Lourdes and Kabbalah nutter. Mary has 1 billion followers – yet Madonna has only sold 250 million albums to date.

Britney versus Christina: Midwest tease versus mixed-race tart. An enduring rivalry exists to maintain similar, yet discerning fan-bases; they managed to pash and make-up in a 2003 MTV photo-op with Madge.

Kylie versus Dannii: The two Talent Time sisters, and one of the biggest non-events in Divadom. Superstars of the London scene, Kylie and Dannii's success proves that conditional love really is the best way to encourage professional success in one's children.

The Queen versus Diana: Matriarch of a nation versus pretty magazine-filler. The Queen proved victorious after the Princess' early withdrawal from competition in August 1997 - bitch.

And thus concludes our crash course in DIVA1001, which proves that no matter how unlikely a star, every bitch is a Diva in pink taffeta.

Gender Terrorism

By Tom Watson

This article has come about due to a deep guilt that has recently parked itself over my head. For months now, I have been wearing a badge which says "gender terrorist" and the amount of people that have questioned me about it are now in their dozens. Tutors, friends, class mates, family, team mates, all have pondered what it is all about. And why am I guilty? Because I have not managed one good explanation. Most of the time, it has been a case of saying, "Well, I don't really know ... but it gets people's attention doesn't it!" While the prospect of leaving dozens of people in a bewildered or slightly baffled state appeals to me, I guess I actually owe it to these curious souls to come up with a better answer. So here goes the little badge's story.

A few months ago I was running back to the Union from the bank when I came across the Jellybabies stall in Union Court. Spotting some familiar faces and perhaps some free goodies, I ventured over to have a chat with those hanging around the stand. As you should expect from a stall in Union Court, there was an assortment of free stuff on offer at the table. The Jellybabies were kindly showering students with condoms, cookies, sexual health information and badges. Huzzah! After snacking on a nice little transgender (who knows?) cookie, I browsed over the badges to see what was on offer. There was a fairly wide variety of badges sitting there but one in particular caught my eye and gave me a chuckle. It simply said "Gender Terrorist" on it and I remember picking it up with a little smile and pondering the term in my mind. "Teeheehee, what mischief" I thought to myself, as I attached it to my bag. Escaping with my new badge, I ventured back into the Union to continue my day.

As I mentioned I have now had quite a few conversations in the past few months that have been prompted by my little badge. Typically, the badge has provoked questions to the effect of "What's a gender terrorist?". Of course I unhelpfully but earnestly would reply that "I don't know... blah blah blah" and that perhaps it was the elusiveness of the term that pretty much drew me to the badge in the first place. "Gender terrorist" floated around without my having any proper conviction about what it was. It gave me a sly little chuckle when people asked about it, so that was good enough to wear it (if only I could say that about all the things I wear).

However, as the months dragged on, I became more and more displeased by my seemingly infuriating answer, that seems to dance around the questions people asked me without satisfying their curiosity. So after some thinking and reflection on some of the conversations, I guess I will hazard an attempt to explain some of the ideas people had about the badge and then my own understanding of it. Two interpretations that didn't fit the feeling of the badge came to mind. One follows the logical links from it being a Jellybabies badge and so therefore that it was about (my) sexuality; the other that it describes a person who literally terrorises people based on their gender. Suffice to say I don't like the first interpretation because contrary to many people's beliefs, not everything that is produced by Jellybabies has to be about homosexuality. Gender and sexuality aren't just for minorities, they affect everyone. The second interpretation, while excitingly in bad taste, also didn't fit with my ideas about the badge.

So what the hell is it about then, George? Well I guess the badge reminds me of how gender in our society still sucks. Of course it's never been about 'gender', in big fuck-off quotation marks. It's about boys and girls, men and women, pink and blue, hard and soft, emotionless and emotional and all that crap. Truth be told, I am not convinced by the 'great differences' or 'abyss' that separate men and women. From what I have observed in my life, these great differences have only existed when people wanted them to exist. My problem with this is not just where one gender is labelled as better or worse, which has a lot to do with the women's liberation movement but runs a little deeper. When we conform to strong stereotypes of gender in our society, we start cutting off what individuals can and cannot do in society, sectioning people into labels marked masculine and feminine. And what I feel is worse of all is when there is a celebration of these qualities that promote and highlight the differences between the sexes. People become proud of the stereotyped differences between the genders as can be seen with 'The Man Show' and the 'girl power' phenomenon. I am sick of seeing examples of people with insecure identities latching on to stereotypes so that they can 'belong'. The reason why people take the easy way out is typically to simplify the process of identity building by using big generalisations about ourselves and other people. We use distinctions to help clarify our own

"My problem with this is not just where one gender is labelled as better or worse, which has a lot to do with the women's liberation movement but runs a little deeper. When we conform to strong stereotypes of gender in our society, we start cutting off what individuals can and cannot do in society, sectioning people into labels marked masculine and feminine."

identities but the extent to which this makes males and females divided really goes too far.

'Gender Terrorism' is about living a life that wants to go and disrupt these dominant gender distinctions. But don't be mistaken into thinking this is about dressing up in frocks and skipping across uni on Monday mornings. Cross dressing for shits and giggles is a culturally acceptable pastime that particularly men and at times women indulge in. It is also not about 'men' acting like 'women' or vice versa but about avoiding the desire to take the path of least resistance - falling back on your sex's gender stereotype as a benchmark to behaviour. Getting out there and actively changing the way we interact with people who belong to our own and the opposite sex. And why should we bother with all of this? Because what we have now means we are cutting people off from ourselves. When we have a simplified image of another group of people then how can we interact with them in a meaningful way? If I think women are all X, Y and Z, how am I going to be able to interact with them without confusion when they start acting like all the letters of the alphabet?

So this is what my little badge is agitating for. It is sick of seeing dysfunctional couples, macho bravado from hollow men and conditioned helplessness from insecure women. Being a gender terrorist has little to do with what is material, what we can touch and pick up but has everything to do with the ideas and concepts that hide behind the way we think about the world. This is what is sought out to be 'terrorised' and destabilised. Picked up and smashed, destroyed but ultimately replaced and improved upon, with more honest and accurate ways of understanding how we conceive of gender and sexuality in life. So I guess that is what "Gender Terrorism" is all about. I hope this has gone some way towards a fuller explanation to all those curious people out there that I had fobbed off. If anyone is still curious for a chat, I guess you can catch me and my little green badge, doing some sprint training while singing Jeff Buckley tunes to myself.

Science's Bad Faith

By Alisdair Farquharson
Smythe

Nietzsche famously pronounced that "God is dead." However, he was making no grand metaphysical claim. Nietzsche was making the social theoretical claim that scientific discourse had triumphed over religious discourses - God was dead and we killed Him through our changed world view. If Nietzsche's view was not quite correct in late nineteenth century, it was certainly prescient by the end of the twentieth century. After centuries of the hegemony of Positivistic Enlightenment discourse, metaphysical statements could only be expected as an amusingly eccentric quirk of your grandparents or the ramblings of the mentally infirm. The ground on which statements made sense no longer seemed to hold firm.

This was despite the fact that science is a severely limited form of discourse. Things that science cannot make sense of as they do not fit within its methods of understanding are simply declared nonsense. Methods of verification cannot produce an idea of God as there is nothing immediate or tangible to observe. As such, for scientists it follows that talk of such things is nonsense. However, there is much that exists that we cannot verify - in fact, pretty much all that any person would value.

Beauty, love, humour, hope, fear, disappointment, and angst are not things that can be observed, yet we have no trouble affirming their existence. They are perfectly real for us and impel us in one way or another every day. It is true that psychology, a 'science' of dubious worth, attempts to provide an account of mental states but can only do so through behavioural analyses and can at most give a description of these mental states in terms of causation. But is that any way to talk of a love, a feeling, or an angst that engulfs us. Does not the method of inquiry just appear inapposite? So it does. Science of course can provide answers. In a sense it can answer every question - it can say everything about the world. In another sense it can answer no question - its methods exclude any proper consideration of what matters, and what we value in life. Any system of thought claiming to offer a complete picture of human understanding should be able account in some way for such things.

This is not to say that religious beliefs ought to be adhered to. What ought to be apparent, however, is that there is a realm of things which lie beyond sensory experience that cannot be dismissed lightly. Such things can be accessed through feelings if one is open to them. So it is with faith. Perhaps scientists should be thrown back into the sea so that they can evolve some sensibility. No, that would be a silly idea.

The Rumours of God's Death Have Been Greatly Exaggerated

By Timothy Caddey

In the beginning, there was a soup. Or perhaps it was some sort of stew. What ever it was, it just happened, apparently. Life just happened. Evolution just happened. Or at least Darwin said it did, so it must have. Ignore the fact that there is nothing more than simple observational evidence to contrary. Evolution just happened.

What, you're not happy with that? You're not one of those weirdos who believe in God created all this, are you?

For humanity, there has been no greater ideal, no greater aspiration, no greater value, then the desire for the truth. There has been no greater quest than to understand our universe and our place in it. It is this concept that has driven human theory, philosophy and belief since the emergence of civilization. Indeed, it is the pursuit of this that for many years defined 'civilization'; the ability to philosophise and to experiment. And even those cultures the West thought as 'uncivilized' pursued these answers in custom and legend. If nothing else distinguishes humanity from the rest of existence, it is that we allocate so much time and effort to finding truth while everything else seems to get on just fine without doing so.

But this pursuit leads to conflict. For every question there is a different answer, and which answer you believe is correct depends on your frame of mind when you answer the question. This is the greatest question of truth and the single greatest value conflict that faces our society, if not our entire species, since we first sought to find these answers. This is the conflict of scientific endeavour and religious belief.

Where exactly this conflict is fought is often the more tenuous issue. One should never go to a physicist with an ethical dilemma, nor should one go to a priest with a complicated equation. But when we start asking the big ques-

"Intelligent Design' bases its claims on alleged flaws in evolutionary theory. It claims that there is no empirical evidence in Darwinism and its derivatives. Most significantly, it raises the point that there is little causal evidence for the Darwinian origin of life, the primordial soup."

tions, the questions that correlate with the reason for our being in this place to begin with, everyone wants in.

It is for this reason that the question of teaching evolution in schools has been raised again in the United States; shot to the forefront with a recent comment made by President Bush that the debate on whether evolution is the "correct" theory should be taught, and that both sides should be presented so that students can make up their own minds. Those of you who now picture the Texan 'born again' President, and fear domination by the Bible belt religious right should take care. No longer is the old theory of Judaeo-Christian creationism, the theory of Genesis, the opposing view. Reformers now champion a theory of 'Intelligent Design'.

'Intelligent Design' bases its claims on alleged flaws in evolutionary theory. It claims that there is no empirical evidence in Darwinism and its derivatives. Most significantly, it raises the point that there is little causal evidence for the Darwinian origin of life, the primordial soup. Evolutionary theory suggests it just appeared. As the holes grow, supporters of Intelligent Design claim that it gives further support to an exterior intelligence pushing the process along.

My aim here is not to champion either side in this debate. My aim is to look at the debate itself, and to demonstrate a stark similarity between this and the very beginnings of modern science. The debate has moved little from this, except for one amusing fact; the roles have now been reversed. What this debate becomes is a demonstration of the establishment's fear of new thinking, based on the normal human fear of what it does not understand. This is a fear based on the reflex action of assuming something is a threat until proven otherwise.

To go back to the origins of modern science, we go back to



Renaissance Italy, to the time of Galileo. Every school pupil knows Galileo was persecuted by the Catholic Church for championing the Copernican model of the Universe that put the Sun, rather than the Earth, at the heart. This flew in the face of religious doctrine of the time, and refusal to recant his theory led to his house arrest. The popular reason of why the church acted this way was simple: fear that Galileo's arguments would win popular appeal, and that this challenge of Papal authority may lead to the challenge of other ideas, thus undermining of the Church's grip on thought and power.

This proved to be accurate, although it was centuries after Galileo that science completely superseded religion as the bastion of the 'truth'. Philosophical argument culminated with Nietzsche's proclamation that God was dead, and combined with the age of modernity, religion was removed in the theory of origins. But no argument or idea would be as damaging as Darwin's Theory of Evolution, that removed the creator for a process based simply on survival.

The similarity between this and the current debate was the response of the Church to Galileo's theory; to simply declare it as false, without any evidence to the contrary. This is the way intelligent is rebuffed by much of the scientific community. Any person who supports Intelligent Design is condemned as a religious fool who fails to see the obvious truth. And yet they provide no evidence to counter the claims of Intelligent Design supporters, adding further strength to the dissidents who claim that Darwinism is ingrained simply because that's what modern scientists were indoctrinated with in their training.

Religious zealots may now say we live in the 'Brave New World' foretold to us through science fiction. Religion is erased because of a belief that it would unhinge the social order, leaving society a weak shadow of itself, driven by

unproven theory. While this may be an extreme view, any person who can see the similarity I have just explained can then see that we live with science which is indoctrinated to us rather than constantly proven. No doubt that if the challenge lacked the exterior force at its centre, it would be treated with more respect, and perhaps even debated on a level field.

Has it now come to pass that science fears something that it does not understand? That something, being perhaps God, is back from its enforced grave? Even some Intelligent Design champions are scared at this prospect, suggesting life on Earth is a creation of alien intelligence. We now of course must ask the next obvious question: who created the aliens?

There is one final twist in the Galilean story when looking at this debate. It is often forgotten that, despite his actions, Galileo was a devout Catholic. He saw the role of science as the study of the grandeur of God, and did not attempt to undermine it. Is there really a need for this separation of religion and science? Have we become so ingrained with the fear of what we don't understand that we forgot why we started on this journey in the first place? Once humans looked at the beauty and complexity of the universe around them and tried, perhaps naively, to find a way to simply answer it all. In doing so, we have fuelled our intellectual advancement in all areas, especially faith, theory and creativity.

So let us have this debate, and let us have it properly. Let's try to find a real answer, rather than just take the one we have now and refuse all others. Let us stop fearing what we don't understand and try to understand it. Let us find once and for all whether we are stardust, or the creation of something much greater. And if we find out it was the aliens, then life will get very interesting.

Faith - Or Lack Thereof

By Katherine Urbanski

"Gradually I learned the routine, as well as the Agnostic etiquette for church attendance. The rules are basic: stand when everyone else stands, sit when everyone else does, don't overtly look up when heads are bowed, and feel free to belt out the songs at the top of your lungs."

I have no memory of ever actually believing in God. I do, however, remember acting as if I did. When I was six, I had an argument with another little girl about whether or not God existed. Hardly an intellectual heavyweight championship, we eventually came to the issue of evolution. She parried that monkey men existed – therefore evolution was how we came about, and not God. And it must be true, since there were photos of live monkey men. I countered with "Well who was there to take the photos? God!" Genius.

Since then my religious fervour has somewhat lapsed. My mother tried to bring my brother and I up little Lutherans. Perhaps she would have succeeded had Sunday School been an afternoon event. As it was, our tantrums at having to get up early on a weekend finally wore her down. Since then, religion has had little place within my family life.

In my late teens, I was forced back into church, this time as a border at an Anglican school. At first it was very uncomfortable. Gradually I learned the routine, as well as the Agnostic etiquette for church attendance. The rules are basic: stand when everyone else stands, sit when everyone else does, don't overtly look up when heads are bowed, and feel free to belt out the songs at the top of your lungs. It's really not so bad, sometimes interesting points are raised, sometimes controversy, sometimes humour. Even so, once I left school, I was happy to continue life as an agnostic.

It's not that I'm not 'spiritual', as the Americans would have it. I believe in nature, in beauty, in love, in fate. I just carry a severe distrust of organised religion. Perhaps this is an inheritance from my father's family. My Grandfather hails

from Poland, a staunchly Catholic country. When a Priest made a move on my 17-year-old grandfather during the war, he walked away from the church – after punching the Priest in the head.

The resulting agnosticism has undoubtedly influenced me.

I have my own doubts about religion, too. These have arisen from my own perspective as a woman, and feminist. The blatant hypocrisy of religion over centuries outrages me. I cannot bear to believe in words spoken hollowly by so many. Nor can I believe in any doctrine that has a history of oppression – of women, homosexuals, and races. While I acknowledge the efforts of organizations to modernise their approach, it doesn't change for me the fact that the words and rituals handed down come from men, and men, and men. There is little for me in any religion where the women are expected to strive for the attributes of chastity and self-sacrifice. I believe I have more to offer the world than an in-tact hymen and patient bedside manner. There are many religious principles that I agree with, and live by. I choose to do so because I believe they are right, not because they are part of a package of rules.

I respect those who do believe. I respect particularly those who believe against popular opinion, who do make sacrifices for their faith. I particularly respect those who do practice what they preach, who strive to follow the spirit, not the letter of religious doctrine. Perhaps one day, I too will find a religion I can whole-heartedly commit myself to. Until then, I'll continue to muddle my way through any moral dilemmas, without a guidebook.



Onward Christian Soliders

By Lachlan Bickley

Recently, on his popular television program "The 700 Club", American evangelical Christian Pat Robertson called for the assassination of Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez. Robertson alleged that Chavez was "a terrific danger" and that he was bent on exporting Communism and Islamic extremism across the Americas (which was somewhat odd given that those two ideologies are largely antithetical to one another). Robertson then called for Special Forces operatives to "take him out," which was interpreted by most observers to mean that he should be assassinated. Robertson drew a link between the war in Iraq and Chavez, suggesting that as with Saddam, the US may find itself engaged in conflict with an entire nation to get rid of one man at some stage in the future. Robertson later apologized for his remarks and said they were taken out of context. That is disgraceful. A man of such strength and faith such as Pat Robertson should never have to repent anything he says in the service of God. Pat Robertson is a vessel through which our Lord and saviour speaks to us. Chavez is clearly an impious infidel and is a clear menace to all God-fearing Christians. His very existence is a threat to the Christian way of life, not just in the US but throughout the world. Thus in the case of such an obviously evil man, not only is it right but also imperative that men like Pat Robertson stand up for the greater community and call for his removal from God's earth.

It is this very last point that is at the crux of this issue; the greater community. This is because Pat Robertson does indeed speak for the majority in the US. The majority of citizens of the US identify themselves as being Christian of one denomination or another, and thus this majority has a right to have its voice felt on moral issues, such as whether or not to assassinate a foreign leader. Indeed there are very few areas where it is not relevant that religious considerations be taken into account. After all God made this earth for us and thus anything that happens here should reflect his desires. The US has begun to move in the right direction by giving George W Bush an extended time in the White House and hopefully he can ensure the moral future of that country. A great step towards achieving this will be if he can indeed load the Supreme Court with more right-thinking, God-fearing moralists like Antonin Scalia. This

will help that country eliminate pernicious threats such as the woman's right to choose, same sex marriages and other immoral pursuits such as, gambling, smoking, drinking, drugs and reality TV. That will allow the US to once again become a mighty country, strong and unified under God and with a clear mandate to take their faith to the rest of the world.

Of course this issue has relevance to us here in Australia. Australia too is a country with a clear (small), majority of Christians who deserve to be given total say over how Australia proceeds in confronting the challenges to faith and morals that the modern world presents. The success of the Family First party in the last federal election was a good start but there is still much progress to be made in making this country the Christian stronghold it should be. For example our Prime Minister claims to be a man of faith however he still allows far too much liberal license in this country. For example there is the question about funding

"Private schools need every dollar they can get to help create our Christian warriors of the future, whether these are warriors of the battlefield or warriors of the board room. Australia cannot hope to compete with the heathen forces being created around the world if we do not do everything we can to support our best and brightest."

of religious schools that periodically rears its head. This questioning should not be tolerated. It is difficult to see why anyone could possibly complain that private religious schools get more Federal Government money than public schools do. These institutions need every dollar they can get to help create our Christian warriors of the future, whether these are warriors of the battlefield or warriors of the board room. Australia cannot hope to compete with the heathen forces being created around the world if we do not do everything we can to support our best and brightest.

The last few years of global events have clearly demonstrated that it is people of faith that will take this century by the throat and make it their own. All of the major events of the last few years can be traced back to issues of faith in some way. The war on terror is as much about religion as anything else. Thus to prevent Australia becoming swamped in this global struggle we need to reject the amorphous doctrines of multi-culturalism and tolerance and embrace religious certainty. It is obvious that this is the best way forward; we can't risk having a future Pat Robertson calling for the head our PM because he can't live up to the Christian ideal.

Information Technology

IT (Ourselves)

By Rachael Kendrick



For a while my friend Cheney's emails were quite terse if they came at all. She avoided typing essays at home, and AIM conversation slowed to a halt. When asked, she told me she was trying to learn Dvorak, an alternative keyboard format meant to be far more comfortable and efficient than the normal one. It makes sense, given her efficient, strange little computer, a cute little blue box named Shuttlebot. "He has a special motherboard," she told me, "and he makes my desktop oh-so-minimalist."

Being a dyed-in-the-wool Mac user I could only sniff that Shuttlebot was, indeed, good looking and speedy for a PC, but nothing compared to swift glory of a pearly new Mac running Tiger. But I couldn't ignore the massive shipping box that landed in my friend Monkey's living room. They'd gone out and bought themselves a top-of-the-line Alienwares machine, designed to handle the fancy-pants 3D rendering they do in that household. The great, glowering, green beast came up to my thigh and hummed malevolently. "The cooling system could air condition a shopping mall. On the sun." Monkey tells me, before adding that he 'handles games the way Jenna Jameson handles dick' before handing me a trial copy of World of Warcraft and sending me on my way.

Your computer really is an intimate reflection of who you are and the way you live your life. They're like pets, except the only rarely poo on the rug or give children scabies. You can read a person's hard drive the way you read their palm; music, old school work, cache files, all a digital copy of yourself. Which is why I was so ambivalent the day MacBain came into my life.

Like pet owners, there are some people who have one computer which they bond with intensely and stick with through thick, thin and attacks of spyware. Maybe Mac owners are more prone to this because they're so darned personable. My friend Warwick has definitely bonded with his shiny, clean iMac. "Being a Mac user is a way of life," he told me. "My heart hangs from the edge of my glistening iMac like my emo side part." I felt the same way about the Baby Mac, successor of the Mac of Doom. I had her for four years, bless. She went gallivanting with me overseas, virtually stroked my head when I sobbed over heart-breaking emails, and didn't roll her eyes at me during my earnest lesbian folk music phase. She was my friend, but she was old and very, very, very grimy. I had outgrown my hardware, and it was time for Baby Mac to be retired. So, the day I brought home MacBain, in all his 14", 768mb SDRAM, CoreImaged, SuperDriven glory, was a day of both great sadness and great joy; sadness at the end of an era, joy at the new reign of MacBain. What can I say? It felt like cheating.

Other people have no such qualms. Monkey and her lad Mattay have a family of many, not just the panty-moistening Alienwares beast dubbed Walletsbane. They also have Bellbert, Onefiddy and MonkeysDamnPuter, and all of them are special and unique in their own way, from acting as repositories for illegally downloaded files to preventing marital breakdown by allowing both Monkey and Mattay to play Warcraft. "It's a filthy nerdy bachelor's life," Monkey tells me, "but we live it together." After all, the couple who quests together stays together.

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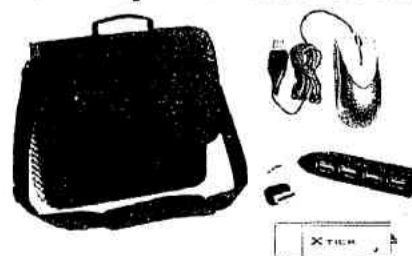
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Theatre

ANU Law Revue: Star Laws
Directed by Adam Brodie-McKenzie
and Gavan Mackenzie
The Street Theatre, 25th August 2005

Reviewed by Michelle Bond

Ah, Law Revue. It's nearly enough to make you want to study law - nearly. But really, I find that the combination of sharp, student-written (and therefore it must be subversive) satire, a bare stage, more fuck-ups than DIMIA and the prospect of singing and dancing law students is quite irresistible. Also having a law student either side of oneself explaining the law jokes is really to be recommended for those who have better things to do than put themselves through the torture of law.

The revue style is quite a favourite with me, as, having the attention span of a goldfish at times, short skits and variety aren't too taxing. The pieces were all of a good length, none too short and none too long; and the order of progression was similarly well thought-out. The introduction of video this year really helped this aspect, diversifying the material presented and keeping the audience fresh. The video made use of various locations and situations that would have been quite impossible to present traditionally onstage, such as the murder (complete with close-up of tomato sauce blood spatter) of lecturer Simon Bronnit, and Assignment of Fire, which featured such diverse locations as the High Court and Telstra Tower, presented with minimal (if any) dialogue. A perfect use of technology, even if we nearly got to see Simon killed twice.

The political satire was particularly well written (R.E.F.U.G.E.E. being one of my favourites, featuring the Vanstone singing to the tune of 'Respect'), and the clever reinterpretation of television shows to demonstrate the absurdity of them (as was the case with Law and Order: Minor Offences), or the absurdity of modern politics, as the Scooby Doo cycle showed (Osama Bin-Laden Where Are You?). The series/cycle type skits worked very well, allowing the usually good characterisations to be seen several times, Dubya and Cheney being particularly sharp. The actor playing Dubya could have made use of the way the real Dubya pronounces the term for his fellow countryfolk, which, if you listen closely, is actually "Merkins," and that would have really perfected that series of skits for me.

Nobody really expects a student production to have any money to actually do anything other than buy beer, and in keeping with this limited budget, the minimal costuming and set were handled very well. The actors wore a base outfit in black, over which various costumes or flourishes could be worn to denote each different character.

The set was usually minimal, relying more on the script and the occasional prop to create the environment (which worked just fine), such as in Genie of the Law, which I believe may have had a book or two to denote the Menzies Library basement, and in Lost, which had two pieces of branch being shaken on the little apron bit of the stage with the curtain down to show the island setting and supernaturalness of that TV show. Again, R.E.F.U.G.E.E. takes honours here, with its clever use of a construction site fence to keep the hordes of refugees/backing singers out of Amanda's space as she strutted and pranced in front of it outlining Coalition policy. The lighting was usually unobtrusive, lots of spotlights on featured performers, even if one of the performers had to move into where the spotlight had been placed at one point (I suppose at least she realised she wasn't in it and corrected her position instead of continuing to sing out of the spotlight.)

The music was effective, if occasionally too loud, drowning out the singers, which made the audience unable to laugh at the undoubtedly amusing jokes. The reinterpretation of various songs was very clever, and yes, Crazy Vanstone Ringtone comes into this category, as does Legal Rhapsody.

Students kicking politicians, lecturers, other students and themselves in the pants, in public, is great, and allowing law students to indulge in their passion for extroversion and exhibitionism is also great, because it means that I get a well structured, highly amusing, usually sharp, and inventive law revue for a nice, cheap, student friendly ticket price. Hooray!

Music

Britt Daniel from Spoon Interview by Nick Craven



It's been a long, tumultuous journey for Austin Texas band Spoon from their early days as a struggling post-punk band dropped from a major label to their coveted position as indie darlings. Their latest album, *Gimme Fiction* takes it all one step further. Praised unanimously by street and mainstream press (*Time Magazine* anyone?) for its display of frontman Britt Daniel's ability to write catchy and clever rock, *Gimme Fiction* is Spoon's fastest selling album to date. I caught up with Britt shortly before he left the States for Australia.

The new album has a lot of textures and different effects on it. How do you pull it off live?

Well, we always consider the live show to not be exactly replicating the record...But we do have some tricks. Like, there's this really great sort of weird sound effect solo in 'Sister Jack' and when we started playing the live version I didn't wanna take, like, a guitar solo or something. So we just sampled the whole thing and our keyboard player just touches a button and the whole thing goes on...

You sing that no-one knows the two sides of Monsieur Valentine. Are there any sides of you that the public don't get to see; that you keep private even creatively?

Yeah, they don't get to see my disco side. They don't get to see my porn side. I keep that to my self.

You guys have been around for over ten years now and in the last couple of years people have started to take more notice. Do you think it's better for artists to have a more gradual rise or would you have preferred instant success?

I would have preferred instant success that sustained itself for a long period of time...

You don't think an instant rise would have been a bit daunting?

Yeah that's the problem...I think [instant success] affects the people in the band in the way that they relate to each other and I think it affects the expectations of what music's all about. I mean, its great when you see a band like the Beatles who rise right to the top and they just get better and better, but for most that doesn't happen. The thing about the gradual rise is that it seems more often conducive to people keeping grounded.

Did you ever get seriously disheartened by the music business on your journey to where you are now?

Yeah it happened occasionally but usually that would just make me go write a song, you know? That feeling of competition (laughs).

You and Jim Eno (Spoon drummer and co-founder) have been working together for so long now that you must be pretty tight friends. What's your relationship like at this point?

We're really tired of each other. We're really tired friends. No, its good. He denies this but I think he's one of the most punk-rock people I know.

So he's pretty hardcore on the road?

Well, he just says no to conventions.

Music

Why do you think so many so-called indie bands such as Spoon have cracked the mainstream in the last couple of years?

Well, 'cos we're better than anyone else... People who care about music tend to care about the way it comes out. They wanna be able to do it for a while. They look at the bigwig playing field at this point and it doesn't really seem to be a thing that promotes good music or long-term careers or even being able to make that second or third record. I think that probably people overall have looked at that and said "I wanna work with a label that understands me." That happens more to people who give a shit about music than it does to people who are in it to, like, become popular. Because of that they get better music on independent labels

Your home state of Texas has received a battering lately by musicians such as Conor Oberst because it's also the birthplace of George W Bush [Oberst announced at a Texas gig: "I'd put a fucking gun to my head before I'd live in your state"]. How do you feel about this?

Well, I'm friends with Conor and I was surprised when he said that (laughs). I think he just drinks a lot. When he drinks a lot he's got a mouth on him... I don't know, it's hard being in Texas. Austin is the one place in Texas where I'd wanna live 'cos the rest of it is extremely conservative and not very cultured... I mean, I'm okay with what Conor said (laughs) but I wonder if he regretted it the next day.

The focus topic for this issue is faith. Do you have a religious faith or anything like that?

Yeah, I'm a Christian. That's how I was raised.

Is that to do with the Texas upbringing?

I guess so. It's not just a Texas thing, it's America. It's a very religious country...

Does Christianity guide your life in any particular direction?

To be good. But I think I'd try to be good to people even if I wasn't [Christian]

Do you have fond memories of your last Australian Tour?

have nothing but fond memories... At the time I think we were all saying it was the most fun tour we'd ever been on and we were gonna try and come back to Australia twice a year, which hasn't happened but, yeah, we had a terrific time.

Even though the album is called *Gimme Fiction* are any of the songs based on fact?

A lot of them are sort of based on things that happened but the two that stand out on there to me as being more sort of personal, actually kind of emotional and real are 'I Summon You' and 'They Never Got You'... ['They Never Got You' is about] growing up in Texas. I mean it could have happened anywhere but it's about growing up, being lonely as fuck and not having anybody to connect to.

What fiction is floating your boat at the moment?

Right now I'm reading a lot of non-fiction, that's usually what I read. I'm reading the autobiography of Motley Crue right now...

Have you caught them on their reunion tour?

I've never seen them live but the book is pretty fun to read.

Apparently they have dwarfs and crazy stuff on stage.

Yeah, it's all about getting wild.

Will Spoon ever get that wild?

Oh, Spoon is all about getting wild too.



Music

Kanye West
Late Registration
Review by Ben Hermann



With the huge success of Kanye West's acclaimed

2004 debut *The College Dropout* and the release now of his amazing sophomore effort *Late Registration*, it seems that grass-roots rap, like so many genres of music before it, may be moving out of the ghetto/housing estates, and into the cushy suburbs of the middle class. Epitomizing the relaxed and poppy feel of many parts of the album, Kanye sings alongside Maroon 5's Adam Levine on the opening track 'Heard 'Em Say' seemingly to warn you that if you're looking for Lil' John-style, pulp gangster hip-hop, you're listening to the wrong album. What sets West apart from much of his MC colleagues is not necessarily his vocals, which may vary between Usher-smooth and Wu-Tang fierce, but that he combines them so well over backings of soul, funk, live orchestras and big bands, Franklin-esque trumpets, and samples from Otis Redding and even Shirley Bassey's 'Diamonds are Forever'. West mixes such influences on 'Crack Music', where his coarse, macho vocals rhapsodize about the debilitating effect of drugs on the African-American community alongside a soft, sumptuous "la la la" choir backing. West's very socially-oriented lyrics – topics include health care, civil war in Sierra Leone, and gang violence – also seem to have contributed to his image as a relatively down-to-earth rapper, which may account for his wide inter-genre popularity. I wouldn't say West's music has matured in the last year (some would have believed it was impossible to out-do *The College Dropout*) but it's become more honed, sharper, and slicker. And he may have realized that not everyone liked those soul-chipmunk samples.

Kraftwerk
Minimum Maximum
Review by Nick Craven



No, your beloved Chris Martin did not discover Kraftwerk. Long before that fresh-faced pom stole a riff from these German lads for questionable artistic purposes, Ralf Hutter and co were pioneering music as we know it. Dance, hip-hop and now even rock have been shaped in some way by Kraftwerk's revolutionary decision to use computers and electronic sounds to create pop. *Minimum-Maximum* collects over 35 years worth of songs that prove why their insane vision was so inspired. Featuring vibrant performances from their 2004 world tour, this is a live album in theory but a glorified best-of in essence. All the hits are here including 'The Model', 'The Robots' and 'Tour De France' and they have never sounded better. Every track is brought into widescreen with the subtle use of reverb giving most tracks a fuller sound than their original recording. This brings attention to the gift for melody and rhythm that Kraftwerk possess, a talent that many of their grandchildren can't claim. Kraftwerk's famed perfectionism is once again on display in the crisp sound quality and flawless track order. The hypnotic flow of the album is only broken when the crowd noise is turned up and then suddenly back down between songs, giving the live concept a slightly contrived feel. Then again, Kraftwerk are all about the manipulation of recorded noise. Long time fans will love this collection for the small but interesting tweaks to the classic songs and those wishing to check out Saint Martin's latest fad will see that X & Y is no *Minimum-Maximum*.

Splendour in the Grass 2005.
Review by Nick Beresford-Wyllie



At about 5pm on Friday the 22nd of July I arrived in the township of Byron Bay in a terrible mood. The delayed flight and five-hour bus trip from Brisbane had cured me of any excitement or optimism I may have had about my first Splendour experience. However Byron quickly brought me back to my senses. Within five minutes of stepping off the bus I had already been offered several varieties of illicit drugs, had been serenaded by hippy buskers complete with guitars, surfboards and dreads down to their knees and had brushed shoulders with members of the band Gerling. I was in heaven, and the festival hadn't even started. The first day began for me with the latest band to emerge from Britain's gritty North, The Futureheads, who proved that a capella vocals and heavy rhythmic beats are just as 'rock' as ever. The next act was Triple J favourite Sarah Blasko who put on a fantastic performance and kept the crowd enthralled with her intimate stage presence and fantastic light show. After an early dinner (best festival food I have ever had) I headed across to the dance/alt tent to see Cut Copy and Ryan Adams. While the former was fantastic, Ryan reacted badly to technical difficulties and was a little disappointing. It was day two that I had been hanging out for, particularly Britpop sensation Bloc Party, New York's oh so apathetic Interpol, The Finn Brothers and finally Moby. The show was fantastic and Bloc Party and Moby were clear highlights for me in terms of crowd reaction, musical performance and atmosphere. All in all, Splendour 2005 was a great experience with great performances from all the bands and a very relaxed atmosphere, at least in comparison with the alcohol-fuelled aggression of the Big Day Out.

Literature

Readin' 'bout Faith and that New-Age Funky Junk

Mutterings by Patchy

Much like a bad case of food poisoning due to that "fish stick" from a dodgy takeaway, Dan Brown's *The Da Vinci Code* may taste good initially, but leaves you exploding from both ends, before finally redeeming itself in provoking you to eat better in the future.

Although coated in a nasty batter of paragraphs seemingly swiped from Encarta, *The Da Vinci Code* has been deep fried in a religious and mystical compound intriguing enough to keep you in suspense even if queasiness develops. However, it has sparked a fabulous awakening to the potential of books centred on ideas of faith - both traditional and the new-age funky junk. It was through reading an assortment of this oddball literature, that I have encountered some insane, uplifting and horrific stories, mostly claiming to possess "truths."

My exposure started off quite early, when my mother discovered an easy way to shut me up was to let me read in church. Unfortunately, my mother felt compelled to supply me with religious books, so my five-year-old brain was bombarded with pictures and stories of Joseph and His Technicolour Dreamcoat. Funky coat, sure, but what about the being sold off into slavery bit by his loving brothers?

Eventually I moved onto the middle bookshelf, stocked by siblings who were attracted to the dust jackets and probably never read them. Heard of Paulo Coelho? The pin up boy of new-age funky junk, he wrote the bestselling *The Alchemist*. More interesting than this aggrandized little fable was *The Valkyries*. It was his apparently quasi-autobiographical account of his previous devotion to Satanism, his adoption into some esoteric and exclusive Christian cult. This was his spiritual journey in which he was tempted to adulterate with a mystical lesbian biker, have a near death experience and eventually discovered and conversed with his guardian angel in the middle of the desert.

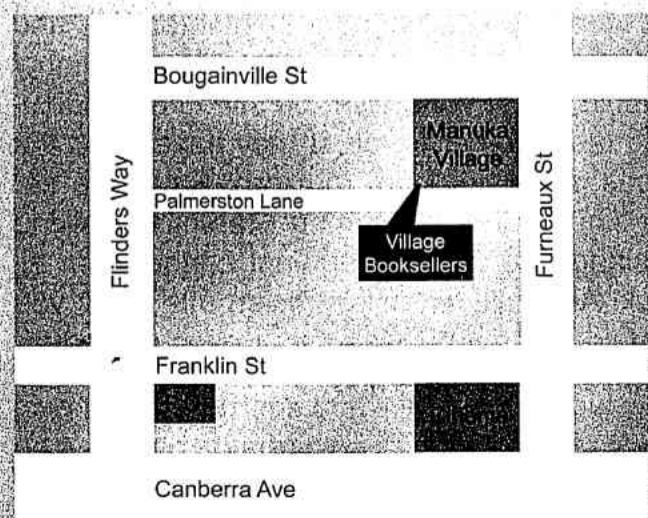
Many such stories are apparently "truly based", meaning you never quite know what is real or hyperbole, allowing them a lot of breadth for mystical overtones. For instance, *The Way of the Peaceful Warrior* by Dan Millman is a similar story involving a search for meaning and understanding of a greater being. This aspiring young gymnast was mentored by an old cigarette-smoking bloke he called 'Socrates' - intriguing - it too set up a money spinner by Millman.

In a similar vein are books such as *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* by Stephen R. Covey. Although more Dr Phil than Buddha, his works are infused with his evangelical Christian background. Hilariously, Covey's latest treat is the amazing *The Eighth Habit: From Effectiveness to Greatness*. Imagine God deciding to dump another commandment on us now - 'Email to world: Re Eleventh Commandment. Be nice to ducks.'

The 'must have' new-age funk carried about by every hippy in the 60s was Herman Hesse's *Siddhartha*. Typically plodding, it remains worthy of a look. Often portrayed in a similar light is Kahlil Gibran and his book *The Prophet*. I am still reading it, and I started eight years ago. Such tales, even if quite fluffy can be quite rewarding and are miles above the "mildly amusing in an unintentional way" likes of *The Blue Day Book*.

Finally, for those with apocalyptic thoughts, there are charming books like *Armageddon*, detailing the various ways in which doomsday has been predicted. *The Cosmic Conspiracy* by Stan Deyo is a ripper I discovered on my parents' bookshelf of 70s Penguin Classics. Deyo starts with Alien spaceship conspiracy theories, and moves onto the Global Government aims of the US, EU, Arab Confederation and Club of Rome, before concluding with thoughts on the Illuminati and Zionist conspiracies and his interpretation of the 'real' salvation offered by God. So much seafood, so little time, a veritable feast awaits. Avoid the "seafood sticks", but do partake my friends.

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Film



Wedding Crashers

Directed by David Dobkin
Reviewed by Angus Johnstone

Let me begin by stating, for the purposes of this review, that I love hangers. I consistently find that I am at my happiest when I jump out of bed on a hazy morning, touch my toes ten times (more an exercise in alliteration and obsessive compulsion than exercise itself), and boot up the computer to check two very important

things: if the internet still has porn, and the cinema session times for the day. One day in August I was extremely relieved on both counts. It was going to be a good day.

To synopsise David and Margaret's synopsis: "John Beckwith (Owen Wilson) and Jeremy Grey (Vince Vaughn)... gatecrash weddings. John suspects that their behaviour is becoming somewhat sleazy (Director David Dobkin tells Owen Wilson to do what the script says or he won't be paid). Jeremy is horrified at the thought of giving up the good life and talks John into one last foray to the wedding of the daughter of Secretary Cleary (Christopher Walken), whom he met on the set of 'that' Fat Boy Slim film clip - not the one with the dance troupe, the other one. And that's where John meets his destiny and Jeremy his nemesis." Fenella Kernebone of *The Movie Show* suggested that the film "...is a quagmire of clichés." I rebuff her in the name of mindless entertainment. If the late Carl Jung were here today, I would buy him a ticket to see this film for his one hundred and thirty first birthday. Afterwards I would strongly suggest that he officially add a few of the film's characters to the collective unconscious, as modern archetypes of the American Romantic Comedy. See 'mean-fiance-whose-future-bride-is-too-good-natured-to-realize-or-really-mind' - such a ridiculous prick that the audience feels no moral qualms when she leaves him at the altar. Also 'sex-mad-future-mother-in-law-hell-bent-on-seduction' - a little edgy, but a guarantee of laughs and cringes alike. And finally the 'psychotic-gay-son' - a new addition, but one which I'd promise Carl Jung was set to become a well loved cliché in the years to come.

The day a film is made which can be entirely understood by the unconscious mind, I will be all the happier as a hung-over moviegoer who could ask for nothing more. Margaret gave *Wedding Crashers* three and a half, David only three. I'm with you all the way Margaret, as always. I want to lick your earrings.

Want to write film reviews for Woroni? Knock out between 300 to 400 words and send it to us at: woroni@anu.edu.au with 'film' clearly displayed in the subject line.

Charlie and the Chocolate Factory

Directed by Tim Burton
Reviewed by Megan McKeough

I went into this film expecting a lot, I'll admit. Granted though, I haven't seen the sugared-up (pun intended) 'family' version of Roald Dahl's timeless tale, 1971's *Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory*. While a crime by many people's standards, this meant that I went into *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* with a clean slate. I mean, the old combo of Johnny Depp and Tim Burton, how could it go wrong?

It couldn't. This new adaptation is sharp, entertaining and enhanced with great acting and set design. The sweet side? Well, the down-on-luck scenes of the Bucket family pull the appropriate heart strings, with the chemistry between the polite and deserving Charlie (Freddie Highmore) and his nice tottering grandpa (David Kelly) is a delightful, if expected, treat. Noah Taylor and Helena Bonham Carter, though not traditional choices, are wonderful as Charlie's parents, and the addition of Wonka's father in a pivotal role works well for me.

Once inside the Wonka wonderland, the bright colours and changing rooms of the chocolate factory are well designed and engaging. Johnny does manage to sweep through and steal every frame though, usually saying something funny and slightly bewildering, and parading his offbeat but fabulous ensemble. The sour side? Not too much, and though the film is formulaic and relies on predictability, watching each rotten child get their comeuppance is still pleasing. *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* gives a classic story the bite I'm sure Dahl intended, and Johnny's wonderful portrayal of the eccentric and flighty Willy Wonka would, on anyone else, be stilted and ridiculous. If anything tasted bitter to me, it may have been the Oopma Loompas' song numbers (horror!). Favourite flavours? Johnny singing 'Good Morning Starshine', talking in super cool slang and warning against cannibalism all fight for top pick. All in all, when you finish this treat, you should be satisfied and happy. Keep your eyes peeled for a fleeting Edward Scissorhands nod.



The Take

Directed by Avi Lewis

Reviewed by Aaron Ridgway, seen at Electric Shadows

Four years ago, a 'commercial documentary' might have seemed oxymoronic. Things have changed though, and films such as *Fahrenheit 9/11*, *Bowling for Columbine*, *The Fog of War*, *Capturing the Friedmans* and *Outfoxed* have won awards and taken truckloads of money at the box office. A wide theatrical release for a documentary is now commonplace.

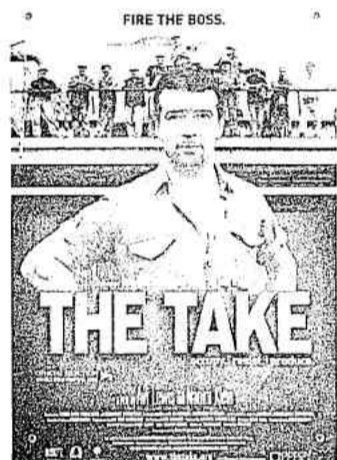
The Take situates itself at the centre of this nascent genre. It examines Argentina's factory employees, who placed their former workplaces under their own administration in the wake of Carlos Menem's profligate dealings with the IMF in the late nineties.

But have you seen the poster? The film's most developed character, Freddy Esposito, stands tough - impersonating either Jean Claude van Damme or any of the members of New Kids on the Block - under the tagline 'Fire the Boss'.

The plight of these poor workers deserves much closer analysis though, and when the outcome doesn't warrant the ironic pessimism of Michael Moore, writer Naomi Klein, and partner/director Avi Lewis opt for sentimentality and predictable storytelling. We get

a tale into which the filmmakers never have the courage, or self-effacement, to disappear. Why does Klein credit herself as a writer? Isn't it the workers' story?

The film is balanced, but more by its inexorable self-indulgence than its quest for truth. I now know more about the problems in Argentina, but only just.



Red Eye

Directed by Wes Craven

Reviewed by Megan McKeough

While *Red Eye* does put a slight spin on a typical thriller tale, it doesn't really have too much to offer in the originality department. Lisa (Rachel McAdams of *Mean Girls*) and Jack (Cillian Murphy of *28 Days Later*) are on a plane together, and just as they take off, Jack informs Lisa that he is a hit man. He needs her help, and Lisa must do as he says or he will have her father killed. Intending to knock off a political figure staying at the hotel in which Lisa works, Jack says that one little phone call gets her, and precious pops, off the hook. While the scream king makes his mark on this film (especially in the last half hour), and in some ways helps to drag it out of oblivion, what really makes this film worth the fifty million dollar movie ticket is the acting. Both McAdams and Murphy serve their close-ups well in different ways, which is lucky too because there are plenty of them. McAdams' tortured expressions and tear-filled eyes fill the frame beautifully, as Murphy's mug is in contrast slightly off-putting and confronting - to good effect. In the same way that McAdams and co-star Ryan Gosling (mmmm) made *The Notebook* more than a forgettable sappy tear-fest, McAdams and Murphy left *Red Eye* more than made-for-TV fodder, which it could easily have been. If I was to pick at anything (else), it would be that while Lisa is pretty well developed as a character (clever but with a dark past), you lose grasp on Jack eventually and in the end you really don't give a shit. Perhaps that's intentional, but whatever. I am being harsh - *Red Eye* was engaging enough and entertaining for a few hours, and clever in many places. Though you won't get more than one episode of *24*'s worth of excitement out of it, *Red Eye* is still worth seeing.



Land of the Dead

Directed by George A. Romero

Reviewed by Claire Holden

People who walk slow and speak gibberish are pretty funny. But people who walk slow, speak gibberish and feed on human flesh? Way funnier! *Land of the Dead* follows a fine tradition of politically subversive horror films, beginning with *Night of the Living Dead*, but this one fails to deliver what the

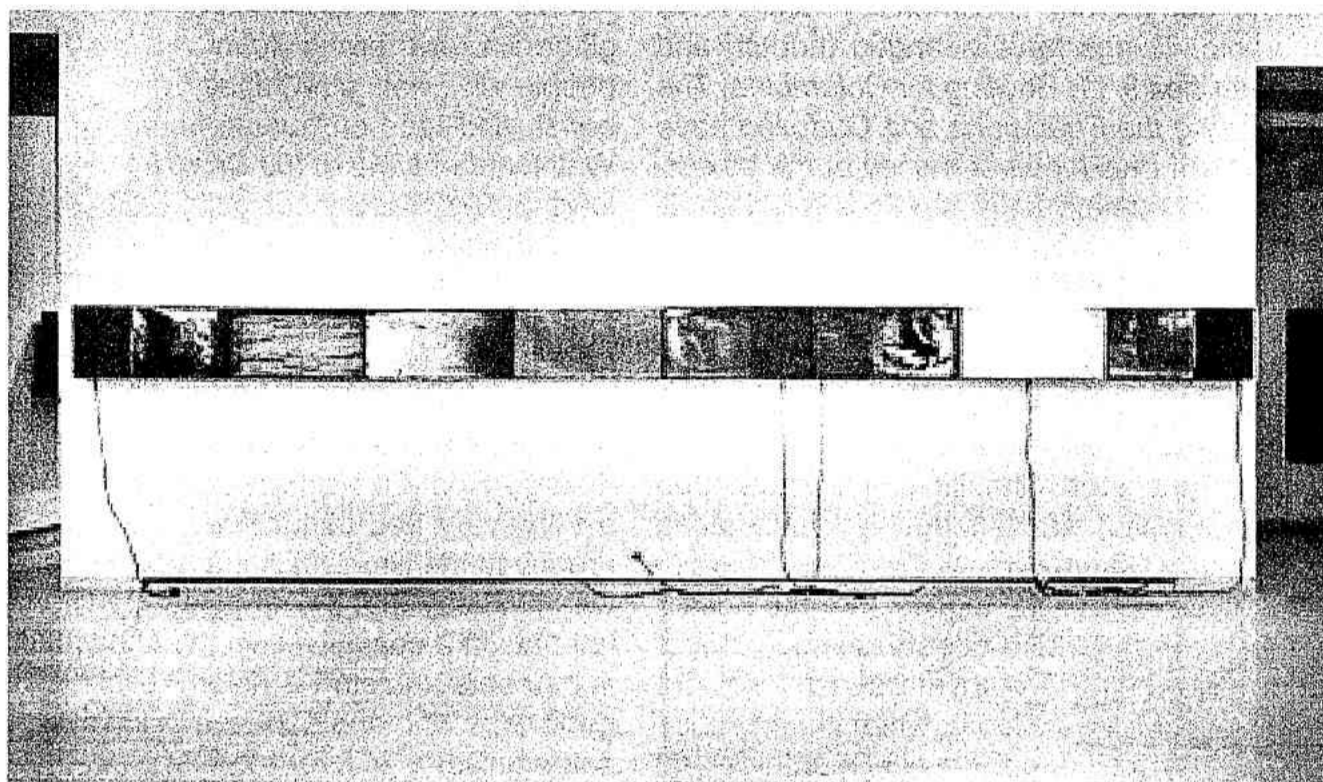
others delivered so well: gratuitous violence. While this is still a violent film, it overemphasises a nasty little thing that our parents would call a lesson in morality. Yep, it seems George Romero wants to remind viewers that money is a very, very bad thing. If we were to take a Marxist approach to the film, which the director seems to encourage, we could say that the zombies are like disenfranchised proletariats in a capitalist society. They take up spades, flock in numbers and start a violent revolution against the bourgeois pigs who oppress them. However, their approach to communism is different to Marx's in that it actually works in practise. One particularly victorious moment saw a damsel thrown over a table, ripped open by her belly button ring and then collapse in an extreme (bloody) close up for the viewing public - sigh. It was almost as enjoyable as the gruesome zombie decapitation, or indeed any of the scenes which feature that buffed piece of arse from *The Guardian* in his tight muscle tops. That is the gratuity we were after! Overall, it wasn't a bad film, but if you're after a lesson in morality from the living-dead, you should head to SouthPac on a Thursday night. There are plenty of teen mothers who have a story to tell.



Art and Photography

Art Report

By Sarah Firth



Forensic 1994, Janet Laurence

At the Drill Hall Gallery in Acton there is a survey of the work of Janet Laurence, showing until the 28th of September. Laurence is a leading Australian artist who explores ideas of memory and perception through shifting representations of the environment. Her work has alchemical references, and combines natural and manmade materials to evoke the meeting point between nature and humans.

The annual SOA Drawing Prize has come and gone again, with the winner Antonia Aitkin announced on Open day. She won the prize for her stunning multi media work on a beautiful old Pianola scroll.

Art and the Bryophyte, a collaborative piece between bryologist Dr Christine Cargill and artist Julie Ryder is showing at the Australian National Botanic Gardens. Funnily enough I couldn't find any exhibition dates written anywhere but I assume that it will be open for at least this month. The research side of the project, looking at cryptogams, was fascinating (these are organisms which do not produce flowers or seeds and they include ferns, bryophytes, algae, fungi, lichens and slime moulds). The framed photographs and cabinet of curiosities were also intriguing. However,

the long fabric drops that were at entry of the exhibition really didn't do it for me, despite being well designed. They seemed quite tacky and touristy, missing out on capturing the uncanny nature of cryptogams.

Stuart Bailey's *Never Upstaged Ever Again* will continue showing in gallery four at CMAG until the 25th of September. He has used imagery of drunk and passed-out youth to raise questions about self-imposed powerlessness and social responsibility. Also showing at CMAG in gallery five is Peter Maloney's exhibition *Gone Tomorrow*, continuing until the 30th of October.

The Valency show at the CSIRO Discovery Centre finished on the 26th of August. The exhibition showcased the work of Avi Amesbury, Anna Gianakis, Jacqueline Gropp, Luke Laffan, Bronwen Sandland and Ken Yonetani. The exhibition was both thoughtful and amusing and made good work of a difficult gallery space. I particularly enjoyed Luke Laffan's works looking at the discredited science of Phrenology and the moving performance piece by Ken Yonetani, of people destroying delicate tiles featuring relief images of endangered butterflies.

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By Sarah Firth



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The Adventures of Woroni Man

Episode Four: 'Extremes'

By Mark Bryan

Page thirty-seven of *The Oppressive Tyrant's Little Book of Calm* offers this lively gem of advice: "If you're feeling stressed, take a minor rebellion, crush it into a fine powder and inhale the aroma with deep, cleansing breaths." Baron Von UberVamp, Minister for Education, Training and Evil, inhaled deeply. He looked down from his podium as it floated above the thrashing storm and saw the flames spread, the stones blacken and the inconsequential students flee. He smiled.

Woroni Man did not smile. He stood silently, vacantly observing a heated exchange between Malcolm the angry socialist and SAC 3000, 'mightiest of the mighty'.

"Did you choose to experience this tree?" demanded the SAC.

"If you mean 'did I pay for it' then, no, I didn't," said Malcolm, gathering momentum, "And I didn't pay for my arse either, you big metal stiffy, but you can still kiss it."

From somewhere deep within the robot's chest a gear turned with a snarl.

"So," it said, "you did not pay for your arse."

Woroni Man looked away. His gaze roamed aimlessly: here was the gold robot standing guard beneath the Baron's podium, over there was the black robot, trying in vain to exterminate a colony of fairy wrens, and down near the bank was the blue robot. The blue robot had approached its task in a more sophisticated manner than its brethren. From out of a large cavity in its chest it had extracted an arsenal of small but highly explosive mines. It had laid the mines at various places around the court and, as Woroni Man watched, it laid the very last one just outside the Co-op, stood back proudly and pressed a button somewhere in its chest. Immediately the numbers 10:00 appeared on each and every mine, glowing red and counting steadily down to zero.

"Attention!" boomed the robot, 'select centres of sensory phenomena are now open for your choice. If payment is not made within ten minutes, the centres will be obliterated. Payment must be made by B-pay and will take five working days to process. Have a nice day.'

"Woroni Man, help me!" shrieked Malcolm as he came

Last Episode:

The first stirrings of a student rebellion against the Baron and his evil SAC robots. Woroni Man, however, remains unstirred...

sprinting full pelt across the court, SAC 3000 pursuing him with solid unstoppable steps.

"It's going to take my arse!"

"I think I may have misheard you there, Malcolm" said Woroni Man.

"No, seriously, he says I didn't pay for my arse so he's going to remove it!"

"Ah, right. Well, try and see it from his point of view for a minute, Mal. Thinking about your arse takes up a lot of brain space. Right now, for instance, you could be thinking about all sorts of important things if you didn't have an arse to worry about."

"But I want to have an arse!"

"Ah, he's got you there. If you really wanted it, you would have paid for it. And what about me? I didn't choose your arse yet here I am thinking about it. It's not really fair to impose your arse on me, is it Mal?"

Malcolm blinked.

"You've lost your mind!" he hooted. The robot was closing in.

Malcolm's first instinct was to headbutt Woroni Man and call him a fascist pig, but in a split second, under enormous pressure, he chose another tack.

"I see what you're saying, Woroni Man," he said quickly, "thinking about arses can be a problem from time to time, but if we say that everyone has to pay a million or so dollars for their own arse or else have it removed, most people, including you, will be arseless. But, Woroni Man, surely there are plenty of ways to stop thinking about arses without actually having to remove them."

The blue glow of Woroni Man's eyes wavered like a gas flame.

"eh?" he said.

"For instance, whenever I start talking about arses, you can give me a quick slap upside the head and I'll stop. You see, if people are accountable for all the shit they talk then there's no need to be so extreme as to remove the whole arse."

Woroni Man's eyes faded softly down to normalcy. Something changed in his expression, Malcolm saw it and felt his shoulders sink with relief. Then suddenly Woroni Man's eyes flared again, brighter and bluer than ever before and Malcolm stumbled back, startled. But Woroni Man smiled. "Good point," he said, nodding.

*"Oh, you have an Arts degree?" said Woroni Man casually.
"Oh yes, just picked it up twenty-two seconds ago. It's
changed my life completely."
"Really? Well there you go, that is fascinating ... oh my God!
Somebody's trying to blow up the complete works of Keats!"*

"I have been authorized to remove your arse," bellowed SAC 3000.

"Excuse me," said Woroni Man calmly. "Something is invading my sensory field, are you authorized to remove it?"

"I am mightiest of the mighty, I will conquer and destroy all sensory invasions. Identify the sensation, little man."

"Righteo: it's you."

The robot stood frozen for a good while then it flounced its mechanical arms, said "Ooh you cheeky bugger," and quietly imploded.

"Ha ha!" cried Malcolm, leaping atop the crumpled cuboid remains of SAC 3000. "We just need to say the same to the other robots and the uni will be saved!"

"No," said Woroni Man, darkly "there's no time - look."

They whipped around to see the closest of the land mines: there were only four minutes left.

"Malcolm," said Woroni Man quickly, "do you have two bucks?"

"This is no time for sundried tomato scrolls, Woroni Man."

"Yeah, fair enough. How about seventy-five cents? ... it's to save the uni ... no, seriously."

As quick as he could, Woroni Man explained the plan and a few seconds later Malcolm had shot off towards the library. Woroni Man himself leapt away in the direction of the blue robot, seventy-five cents in small change jingling in his pocket.

The Baron had seen the red robot implode and wasn't happy about it. "Feeling down?" asks page forty-nine of *The Oppressive Tyrants Little Book of Calm*, "pep yourself up with a maniacal laugh." The Baron laughed (maniacally) then choked as he saw that strangely familiar bloke with the red undies running towards the blue robot. With a gasp the Baron espied what was happening, but before he could shout out, the bloke with the red undies had shoved a bunch of coins into the robot's bum-cheek and hit a few buttons. Down from the podium leapt the Baron, his face muscles twisting and aerobicising with fury.

Less than a minute later Malcolm appeared beside Woroni Man, breathless and laden with books.

"I've got them all," he wheezed, "Complete works of Keats, Keats and the Romantics."

The timers read 1:45.

"Quick," said Woroni Man, "stick one on top of each of the bombs ... Go! Now!"

Malcolm zipped away and Woroni Man jumped around in front of the robot just as the Baron came striding towards him through the smoke with the gold robot stomping menacingly behind.

"scuse us, mate," said Woroni Man to the blue robot, "I'm just trying to remember something - what's the name of that guy who wrote about the nightingale, you know,

English bloke, died young ..."

"mmmm", said the robot rapturously, "you mean Keats of course. Ahh, Keats. Yes I studied a lot of Keats in my Arts degree."

"Oh, you have an Arts degree?" said Woroni Man casually.

"Oh yes, just picked it up twenty-two seconds ago. It's changed my life completely."

"Really? Well there you go, that is fascinating ... oh my God! Somebody's trying to blow up the complete works of Keats!"

In a titanic Shakespearean gesture Woroni Man flung his arm out wide and pointed straight to the nearest of the land mines, atop of which lay a copy of Keats: *The Greatest Hits*.

The robot saw it, squealed, then turned slowly, muttering gravely each time it spotted another bit of Keats balancing on a land mine. The timers read 0:56 left.

"Knaves! Philistines!" it roared before hitting a button on its chest. The timers froze.

Across Union Court a curtain of smoke rippled, stretched against the fingers of a gentle breeze and parted. Sunlight poured in. Woroni Man stepped calmly forward and faced the Baron. All was quiet: the screams and the fires had died. Only two sounds could be heard: the rustle of footsteps as hundreds of students encircled the Baron and the occasional obscenity emanating from the black robot each time another fairy-wren slipped through its fingers.

"It's time for you to go, minister", said Woroni Man.

The Baron's eyes flicked from Woroni Man to the crowd and back again. He wrenched his face into a vicious snarl and sprained a muscle in his cheek.

"Let me tell you something" he hissed. "This is the very last victory for people like you. The tree-hugging fads that you hold so dear have none of the resilience needed to survive in a world of international competition."

"Fads like Keats, for example."

"That's right, Keats and all his new-fangled ideas, they won't last a month!"

The Baron laughed, maniacally of course, grabbed hold of the gold robot's arm and launched into the air. The robot's jet-pack cut a blazing arc across the sky and the Baron was gone.

"Dicknose son of a whore!" shouted the black robot.

"Couldn't have said it better myself," said Malcolm. "I'll sort that robot out. Anyone got seventy-five cents?"

Woroni Man smiled. He had conquered his ambivalence and the uni was saved. It was the end of his latest adventure: everything had been satisfyingly sorted out and there wasn't a single loose end.

"Righteo then," he said, "think I'll go home and fix myself a toasted sandwich."

Keeping the Faith

By Steve Peterson

"At least some organizations have the courage to question and oppose the more contentious ethical dilemmas that most of us would be content to ignore. By stirring up debate and delaying these new 'progresses', at least humanity gets a chance to consider what they are doing before it's already done."

When I saw the theme for this edition of the Woroni I must admit I felt a little queasy. I dreaded article after article ridiculing or questioning faith, or on issues such as Bible bashing, land stealing, and suicide bombing. In the example of our esteemed leader John Howard, I thought I would launch a pre-emptive strike such articles. I'm not out to convert you. I'm not a member of any Christian group on campus. I'm not even a good Christian though I do try. I'm just interested in religion and only hope to say why I don't think it's a danger, a joke or a waste. Also, I apologise for taking a Christian slant on this article as faith is broader than that, it's just what I know most about.

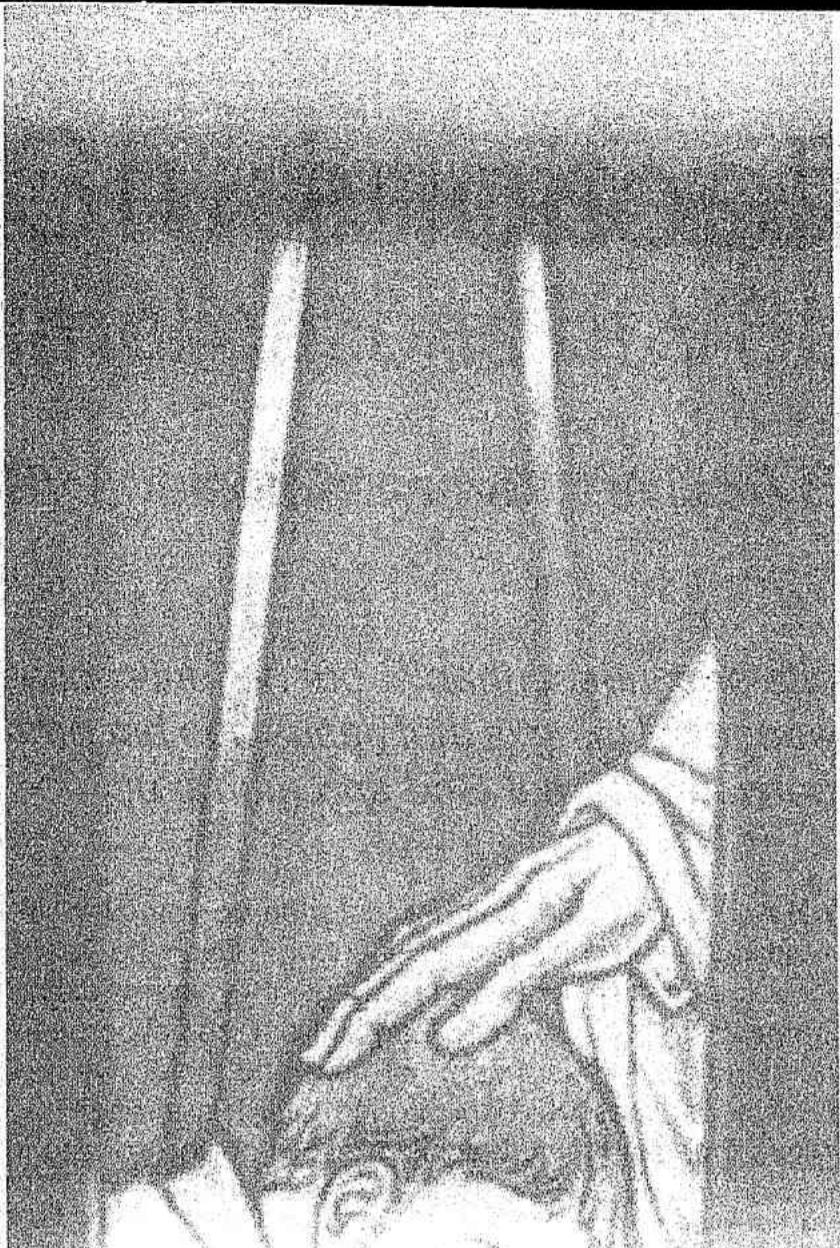
I've often heard people moan something like "so much blood and violence and war and bad nasty things have happened in the name of God." They then launch into describing the suffering that the Crusades, religious persecutions, the Inquisition, Al Queda, the IRA and the Mormons have inflicted on humanity. Surely then God is a bad thing on balance. Well for anyone involved in these dubious organizations I think God's just a front. At the heart of all those injustices was not a sincere desire to seek God, but a way to justify war, theft, conquest, xenophobia, and hassling people in their homes on weekends. There will always be bad people and sadly even with all the progress humanity has made the world seems more unjust than ever. God didn't cause this though, we did, so it's a bit suspect to blame God rather than tackling the real cause of the problem.

I'd also like to point out all the good things that faith has done for humanity. Whether religion is the opiate of the masses or not, it genuinely enriches and gives focus to billions of lives. Think about the great people who have been inspired by their faith to do fantastic things for the world and it's people. Mother Teresa, who founded a reli-

gious order last century devoted to the poorest of the poor. John Flynn, a Presbyterian minister who wandered into the outback seeking lost souls and ended up founding the Royal Flying Doctor Service. Didi, a Buddhist nun I had the privilege of working for during two weeks in Mongolia. She runs an orphanage and school for a hundred street kids who otherwise would not survive the vicious winter. We all must have a Flanders-like neighbour or classmate whose faith motivates them to live a good life and this should be a good thing. In some places of the world, faith may be a cause of tension and conflict (with land or power the real issue), but in others, faith is the only thing people have to survive on. Don't knock the only crutch away from a cripple, it just isn't nice.

Another thing organised religion gets slammed for is its accumulation of wealth and power contrary to the teachings of their founders. This is possibly true, yet the large organized religions are among the more active forces in relieving poverty and standing up for injustice in the world. While some Churches and Mosques in the heartlands of their respective faiths could be criticized for dripping in gold, the priests that I have known live in poverty. While there are undeniably religious men and women who abuse their position in terrible ways, the majority are servants of society who make sacrifices I never could and they deserve our admiration. Yes I'm sure we could all think of better uses for the money of the churches, but on balance, most of their wealth and influence goes towards positive action in our world.

Having religious organizations on the sidelines of society kicking up a fuss about moral issues can be annoying to some. You can question how celibate old men can really make judgements on sexual morality for example, and I'm sure there wouldn't be a person reading this who wouldn't



disagree with some of their statements. However, at least some organizations have the courage to question and oppose the more contentious ethical dilemmas that most of us would be content to ignore. Sometimes their efforts may be better spent elsewhere, but by stirring up debate and delaying these new 'progresses', at least humanity gets a chance to consider what they are doing before it's already done. Governments and business have proven characteristically inept at putting the breaks on some scientific, legal and moral Great Leap Forwards occurring all around us. Faith can motive people to do just that.

I guess the fifty-dollar question (hey, that's a lot for a student) is that if God exists, why do so many bad things happen in our world? I'm not a religious scholar, I only study medical science, so having asked the question I'm not actually going to answer it. However this is our world and our life to make what we want of it, so I'm genuinely happy that some sort of divine law (or organised religion) isn't stuffed down our throats. If that means the world is not as good as it could be, well that's a small price to pay for our free will. I guess if we wanted some guidance on what is the right thing to do with our free will, we'd only have to consult thousands of years of thought on the subject in the Bible, Qur'an, Vegas, Torah, et certera.

So what's the point of this ramble? I guess on balance if you think that faith and religion is an out dated relic, a joke or a curse on society, think again. There is something bigger than us out there and having a faith can really broaden your perspective on reality and give purpose to an uncertain life. Every civilisation on earth has had a faith of some sort as an integral part of society and we (for now at least) are no different. Far from being unnatural and objectionable, faith is part of what makes us human.

Faith Beyond Religion

By R. Young

I walked into a lecture one morning, sat down and thought, "How can I know that the lecturer will not put completely different material in the exam to what we have been taught?" He may have told us so, and it may be the university's policy, but how can I really be sure? Yet I am not worried that it may happen. Why?

I thought and thought, but I could find no reason except that I have faith in the university system and the lecturer. And it is impossible to know whether this faith is justified until after the exam. Of course, every time I have been in this situation in the my tears have not been realised. But is the past any guarantee about what will happen in the future? How do I know that the university administration will not suddenly reinterpret (from my point of view) all their rules drastically, making it impossible for me to pass the exam. For better or worse, I have some faith in the university.

For that matter, how can I be sure that the wheels on my car won't suddenly fall off next time I hit 100 kilometres per hour? I have faith in the manufacturer, my mechanics and the fact that the physical world will behave the same way as it has in the past. There is no conclusive reason why the metal in the axle will continue to hold in the future as it has in the past. The laws of science may say it will, but the laws of science depend on the very assumption that the future will be like the past.

For better or worse, I have faith that the future will be sufficiently similar to the past. Otherwise, I would not get up in the morning, for fear that the floor would collapse as soon as I stood on it and that air would suddenly become poisonous. But then, I could not stay in bed for fear that the mattress will spontaneously combust. I would be paralysed with fear, yet scared to do nothing, unless I could trust that today will be sufficiently similar to yesterday.

I have some faith in many things: my car, my cooking, the university, shops, the phone company, Science, the regularity of the universe. Given this, it may not be much of a leap to have further faith in a God who has made a regular, inhabitable, generally trustworthy world. It may be less of a leap than believing that the world is trustworthy for no particular reason at all.

Personal Reflections on Faith

By Berenice de' Medici

"He's infinite and indescribable, but not unreachable. The wonderful thing is that Jesus has become a bridge between eternal God and mortal us."

There is so much I could say about faith – it touches every topic. But I think the only thing I really have any authority on is what it means to me and how it's changed my life.

Faith is...

"...born of a furnace of doubt" – Fyodor Dostoevski

Faith isn't about certainty – it's about trust. It's reassuring to know it's natural to ask questions and that God wants you to do that. When I read things in the Bible that jar a little, or seem to contradict another passage, I ask questions; Gideon doubted, Moses even argued with God. In a paradoxical way, often the more you doubt, the more you end up trusting.

...arational. Not irrational, but beyond reason itself. My emotions and too often my own actions show me the limits of reason. An extension for this I heard recently was faith is tuning in to a broader reality. I like this idea, that there's something beyond what the world sees; inexplicable, yes, but real nonetheless. God is beyond what I will ever comprehend in this life, but the glimpses I catch are amazing. His infinite nature is what's so beautiful. The whole point of God is that He's bigger than us in every way – if the knowledge of humans could fully explain Him, I wouldn't be so in awe of Him. He's infinite and indescribable, but not unreachable. The wonderful thing is that Jesus has become a bridge between eternal God and mortal us.

Personal Revolution

"I think the place to start is to recognise the individual's quality of incompleteness, of being an unfinished product. The vestiges of the past are brought into the present in one's consciousness..." – Che Guevara

Religion is our search for God; but God reaches out to each of us through Jesus. The remarkable thing, and a huge relief to me, is that it's not about what I can do. Grace sets Christianity apart, all I have to do is accept my failings and turn to God for His forgiveness. Even better, "where sin abounded, grace abounded much more." (Romans 5:20)

"The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart - these, O God, You will not despise" (Psalms 51:17)

W H Auden was right, it is hard to open up yourself: "We would rather be ruined, than changed." Over the years, God's comfort has drawn me up out of cynicism, disillusionment, emptiness, crazy fear, nihilism, self-absorption, and self-pity. He has made me more and more aware of my own weaknesses, and through this, His strength – I believe that everything I 'achieve' is His power working in me; He is an active God who is always with me.

"Now, with God's help, I shall become myself" – Soren Kierkegaard

When nobody else can understand me, when I can't understand me, Jesus does – He sees inside the heart (Psalm 139, 1 Samuel 16:7). And He knows what it feels like to be human, to be young, to be an outsider, to be alone in a room full of people; He was all of these things. I've changed so much I wish everyone who knows me now knew me back then too. It hasn't been about me working to fit the image of perfection – I'm always messing up – but it's the love of Christ turning my heart. This is the love that suffered desertion and betrayal by close friends, separation from God, death on a cross – emotional and physical pain beyond anything I've ever endured.

Beyond Myself

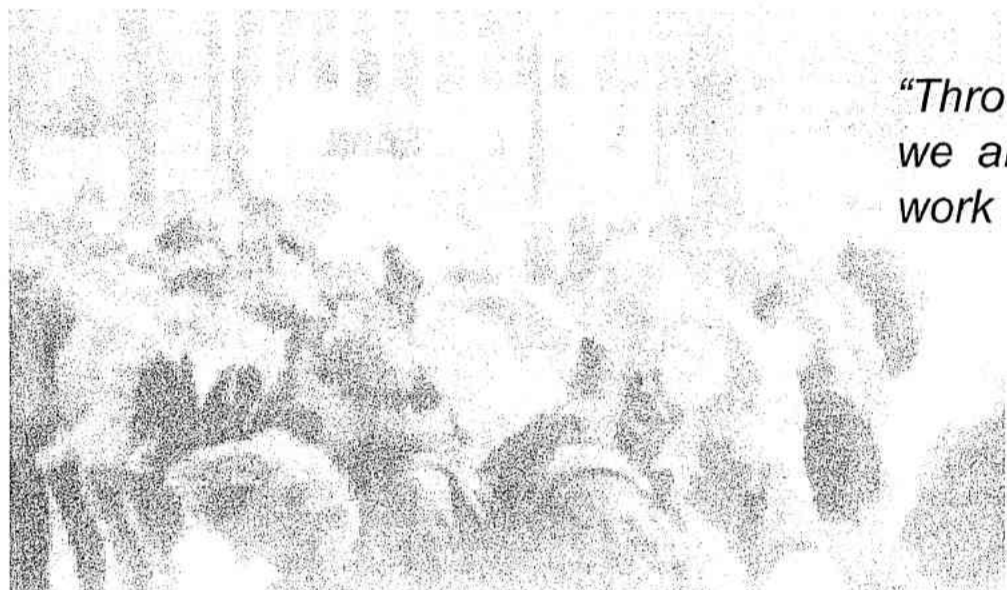
"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me" – Paul (Galatians 2:20)

I find that things I previously made myself do as part of a routine, such as going to church, reading the Bible and praying, are things I now enjoy and look forward to doing. Jesus helps me to appreciate so many different things. He continues to challenge me and encourage me to seek answers and to be more Christ-like.

Jesus has taught me how to truly love – what it's like to live, even for a moment, for someone other than myself. When you stop worrying over yourself, and stop feeling self-conscious and like you have to prove yourself, it leaves you free to listen to others. Christ helps me love them more than my own heart is capable of doing.

Students as Workers: Implications of VSU on Individuals

By Louise Crossman, ANUSA Education Officer



“Through these collective organizations, we are strengthened in our capacity to work for a change that appropriately reflects our lives as students and as workers.”

Students have one pretty obvious common bond – that we’re all studying, be it to get an education, to get a job, to enhance our knowledge and communication skills, and/or because we’re interested. The similarities between us don’t end there however – students are increasingly, and overwhelmingly, workers in today’s society. The cost of living, and the decline in government support for education, make study and work a coexistent reality. A survey of full-time ANU undergraduates in 2002 revealed that more than eighty-seven per cent of students worked to support themselves. This statistic is compounded when considering part-time students, and those deferring to earn money to support themselves during study.

Young workers in today’s economy – those who are working in low-paid, low-skill jobs – are frequently doing so as a stop-gap: to see you through to the end of tertiary or vocational. Yet it’s apparent too that these student workers are also among the most vulnerable to unfair work practices. Highly casualised, cash-in-hand, ‘flexible’ employment may suit us in some respects – but in others, we’re vulnerable to the whim of employers, the low pay of unskilled labour and the vagaries of an insufficient welfare system.

This is the point at which the stop-gap stops. Because when the means to support yourself in study is disabled, or when your low-pay and the high cost of living just don’t meet up, your primary intention of education is challenged, and in some cases defeated.

The implications of the Howard Government’s policies on industrial relations and student unionism are significant for this reality. The voluntary student unionism legislation proposed by the Howard Government, and soon to be enacted, is not saved by Labor Party amendments to secure student services. Existing representative and political functions of student unions enable student engagement in the issues that go beyond parking, yet present a stark

reality for many students on campus. Trade unions too are under attack, as are low-wage workers from the Howard Government’s industrial relations reforms. These attacks are made on the ability of students – on campus and in the workplace – to organize collectively to achieve their own balance, between work and study, and between work and life.

Currently, we are all members of a student union; one that has campaigned across the spectrum of students’ realities, and not just on campus and in class. Lecture taping is an example of a small, but significant, achievement of student unions to make balancing those competing interests a little bit easier for students. The emergency loans, welfare support and free legal advice offered by the Students’ Association are further examples of how your union recognizes the conflicts we face, as students, as tenants, as workers, and works to balance those out.

Many of us are members of trade unions too, which represent us and facilitate our organization in our workplaces. Through these collective organizations, we are strengthened in our capacity to work for a change that appropriately reflects our lives as students and as workers. We want to study, and to study we need to work. We recognize that for many, the lack of work prevents or disables us from studying. This is a reality for students, and it’s a reality too for unions – trade unions and student unions.

Unionism is about more than our interests individually; it’s about our interests collectively. And unionism is about more than representation of a sectional interest; it’s about recognizing the holistic reality of our lives and striving to balance the competing interests that are bound to exist. Unionism isn’t just about work, or about study; it’s about a community, and that’s something that under this Government, we have to fight to belong to.

ANUSA

Women in Education Week

Monday Sept 26th

Vegan BBQ and mini-market and sports day
11am til 3pm – Chifley Grass Area

Kick off Women in Education week with grilled vegies, tabouli, hummus, and pita bread. A plethora of vegan delights! Stop by and grab some info, a kebab and a ticket to the trivia night.

Tuesday Sept 27th

Grrrls Night In
7pm - ANUSA

Come and celebrate Women in Education week with some chick flicks and food to share.

Wednesday Sept 28th

Women on Campus Food-Based Event
10-12 - The Rapunzel Room

Haven't been to the Rapunzel Room yet? It's time to find it, make more women friends, and enjoy some delicious treats as well. [Women Only]



Information was correct at time of printing, but be sure to check out our programs closer to the date to make sure you don't miss anything!



Pussy Warrior

Fighting for the rights of vaginas everywhere

Thursday Sept 29th

Something Funny in the Bar

3-5pm - The Uni Bar

There will be something funny going on in the uni bar.... it will be womanish.... check it out.

Friday Sept 30th

Campaign Launch

2-3pm - ANUSA Conference Room

Help us launch our new campaign entitled "**While You're Down There**". Interested? Want to know more? Then come along! Champagne and important health information to be had by all.

Trivia Night

7pm - Imperial Court Restaurant

A Women in Education Week staple, the trivia night usually raises funds for charities and women's organisations. This year, due to the impending doom that is VSU, we are the charity. Dinner and fun for just \$15 [non-students \$20], what more do you want?

-get your ticket in the refec in week 8, or at any event in Women in Education week-



Freedom Festival 05
 Sunday 25 September 7pm - late
 Uroula Rucker
 Ben Mono
 Blaqueriegn
 Bec Paton
 Tah'licious
 Mikah Freeman
 Ashley Feraude & Cris Lucas
 @ Tilleys Wattle St (cnr Brigalow St) Lyneham, Canberra
 Tickets \$15 by presale and more on the door available from Landspeed records, Tilleys and online. All profits go to Amnesty International Australia.
 For online tickets, CD sales, artist profiles and full event details see www.amnesty.org.au/freedom

ANUSA

ANU Environment Collective Under Threat From Cuts to Student Unionism

By Julian Hay

The Environment Collective has been actively been involved in the environmental movement for over five years. It has engaged in political activism and campaigned for positive social change, supported and nurtured students' ideas to collectively alleviate the burden on the earth's natural resources. Publications such as the Green Guide are regularly filled with information and great ideas on how to save energy, reduce water consumption, live off road-kill and live in a yurt (and that is not all see www.greenguide.net.au). The Collective has led the way in collecting disused junk and other debris, to identify its useful nature and redistribute it to students. The Collective has also organised 'Reclaim the Streets' and other protest rallies in the name of protecting the environment from the ecologically ignorant policies of the Howard Government. The Collective has always looked forward to sending students to

"The Collective has led the way in collecting disused junk and other debris, to identify its useful nature and redistribute it to students."

conferences such as Students for Sustainability, which has provided a wealth of inspiration for the collective and students across Australia, thereby stimulating and maintaining interest in the environment movement. However, with the proposed introduction of VSU and its user-pay policies, whether consciously or unconsciously, will destroy the ability of the Collective to fund these projects. This will bind us to specific obligations associated with donations and therefore restrict the free spirited nature of the Collective and the broader education of students. So before it is too late, hopefully we can add some weight to the growing opposition to VSU, which is being brought before parliament this September. If you want to help stop this legislation or find out more about the Collective then please come into the office. Meetings are at 5pm on Tuesday and there's free food and an opportunity to discuss environmental issues, get involved in campaigns or to get your ideas out there. Please contact me on 61259869 or enviro.collective@anu.edu.au or just come in and talk to us and see what resources we have available.

ARE YOU

**SOMEONE WHO IS BORED BUT HAPPY,
 SCARED OF FAILING, THINK VSU IS A DISEASE,
 DON'T LIKE USING A MAC, RIDE A BIKE, WORK FOR
 \$10/HOUR AND FEEL THAT INSIDE THERE IS A
 CREATIVE SOUL JUST ACHING TO GET OUT**



**THEN TELL SOMEONE WHO CARES!
 TAKE THE ANU
 STUDENT ASSOCIATION
 SURVEY!**

& WIN

**A \$400 flight voucher
 from STA Travel, and a
 return bus trip to
 Brisbane from
 Greyhound Australia!**

**Just go to the
 ANUSA website**



<http://sa.anu.edu.au>

Ad Deconstruction

By Rachael Kendrick



Oh, Microsoft, you don't really know where to turn, do you? You're used to thinking about computers as alienating things, useful only to businesses, the government and those who will never know the touch of a woman. It makes sense. After all, you emerged from a time where computers either occupied entire rooms and were worked by Brylcreemed men in thick glasses hunched over piles of punch cards, or were jerry-rigged together in the garages of real, jock-fearing nerds. Then Apple came along, and while arguments over the actual value of Mac versus PC will rage until we are all old, grey and ugly, I can at least tell you this – Apple's marketing deeply changed the way we look at, and buy, computers.

It works like this. When computers gradually became something the average, non-nerd, non-specialist person could use, or at least buy, it was up to companies like Apple to make computers familiar, friendly and desirable. They had to tell us how to use them and why we'd even want to bother. While Microsoft was still struggling with the idea that a graphical user interface might actually be a good idea, Mac was developing a cult following which has never really gone away. They cottoned on to the idea that computers had to be whole, friendly systems that demanded little of the user, and you can see this idea in their marketing today. iMac, iPod, iTunes, iBook – all of them slick, sexy, appealing little products. Apple ads are quiet, elegant and cool. They know they're good, they know they came up with it first, and they know you want it.

Now Microsoft is trying to hone in on the whole iLife act, and, bless, they just aren't doing it that well. The only thing Microsoft has on their side, culture wise, is familiarity. There are still people queued up in Infoplace in wait for the PCs, muttering about how they never did fathom that newfangled OSX nonsense. People like Microsoft because they don't have to buy into the cult of Mac and they're too scared to enter into the murky world of Linux. Microsoft could have worked with this, said, "hey, at least we're not sticking the prefix 'i' in front of everything," but they didn't do that.

Instead some dim-witted advertising guy, his brain ruined by years of coolhunting and viral marketing, flicked through a copy of *Wired* and thought, fuck it. Why don't we try selling this shit the way everyone else sells their shit, with a photo of some messy-haired cool kid and the same collagey, fluoro, vaguely nostalgic graphics used to sell everything from soft drink to underpants? They try, bless them, they try, but it really doesn't hit the mark. The girl they chose to look creative, cool, and possibly stir the drawers of nerdy lads and lasses is dead-eyed and slightly plastic-looking. The disingenuous explosion of neon graphics (tres Jem and the Holograms) doesn't convince us that, with the wonder of Microsoft, you could "start something sonic."

Honestly, Microsoft. When Trent Reznor will make an entire music video dedicated to the brushed metal glory of the Powerbook, and when people everywhere don the ubiquitous iPod along with their shoes and underpants in the morning, you know the rip-mix-burn niche has been filled. You've got to work with your strengths. Instead of trying to shoehorn yourself into a category amply filled by Apple's haunches you should remind people of what they already know. 'Microsoft: non-threatening and familiar.' Yeah, that'll work.

Gig Guide

September

- 21.09.05: Tzu + The Vasco Era @ ANU
End of Fashion + Neon + Elemeno P @ UC
UNYA's 'Peace One Day' @ 6:30 in Tank
- 22.09.05: A Stab in the Dark + The Jonestown Syndicate + The
Coma Lies + Moments @ The Green Room
Kisschasy + Horsell Common @ ANU
- 23.09.05: Drumatic Twins @ Academy
- 24.06.05: In the Grey + Mere Theory + Lamexcuse @ The Green
Room
Roots Manuva @ ANU
- 25.09.05: Motorace @ ANU
- 26.09.05: Hancock Basement @ The Phoenix
Michelle Shocked @ Tilley's
- 27.09.05: Michelle Shocked @ Tilley's
- 29.09.05: Jeff Lang @ ANU
- 30.09.05: Four4 (DJs Spar and Bastian) @ The Green Room

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October

- 01.10.05: Red Paintings @ The Green Room
- 08.10.05: The Tranquilizers + The Golden Age + The Ashburys +
The Fallen @ The Green Room
- 15.10.05: Lucy's 21st Birthday Party @ her house
- 16.10.05: Artcore @ M16 Gallery, Mildura St, Fyshwick

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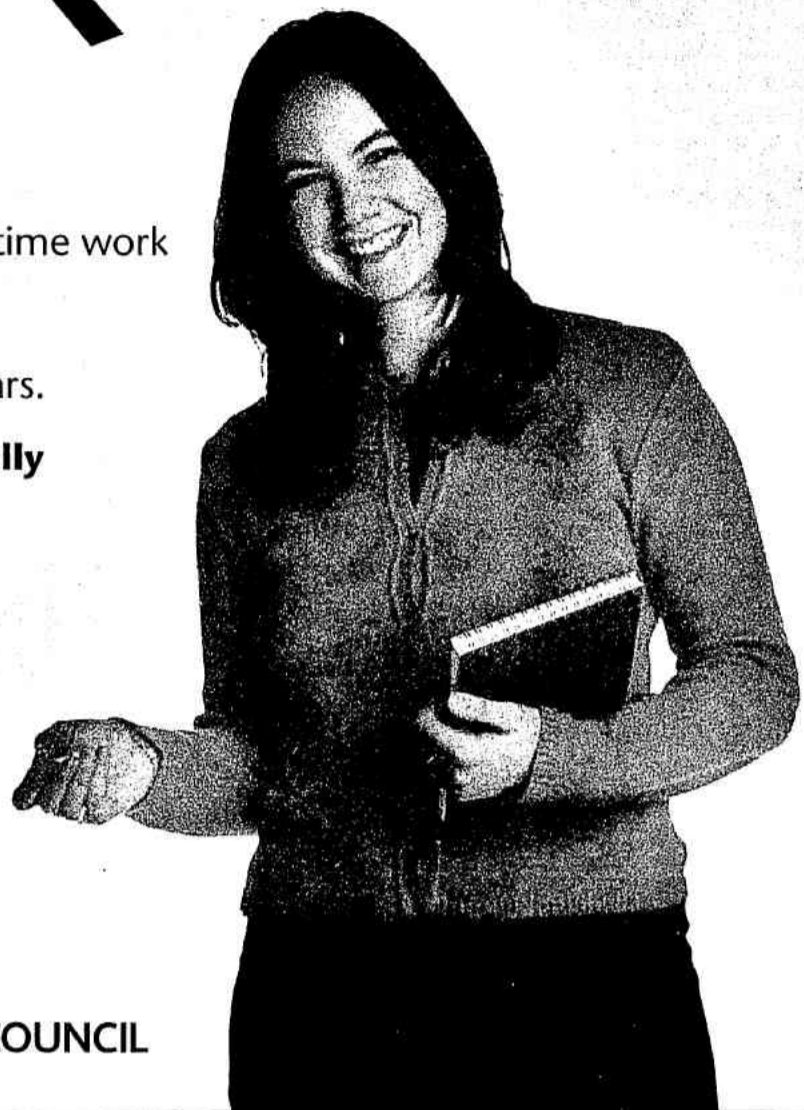
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Do you need help with an equity-related complaint?

The **Equity and Diversity Unit** can help you through providing confidential advice and assistance regarding matters to do with discrimination and harassment

The ANU is absolutely committed to providing a study environment free from unlawful discrimination and harassment.

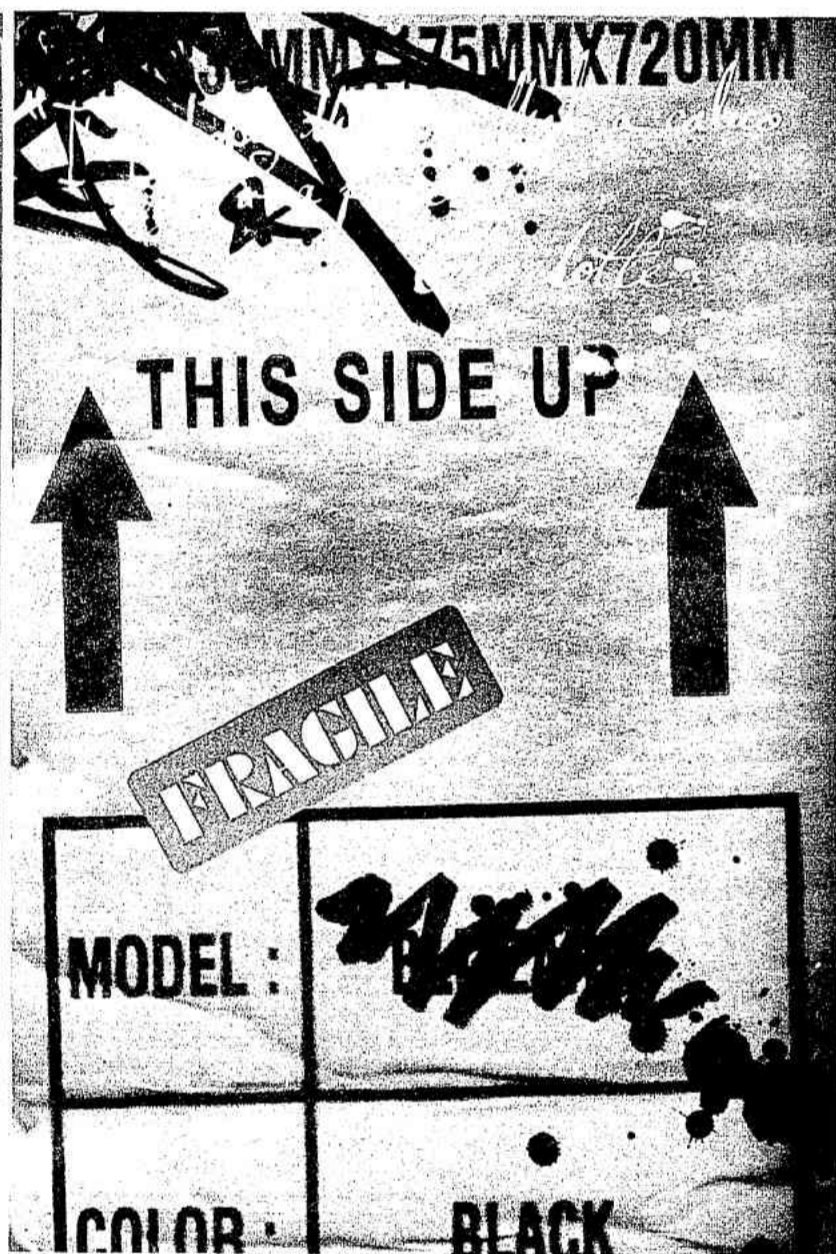
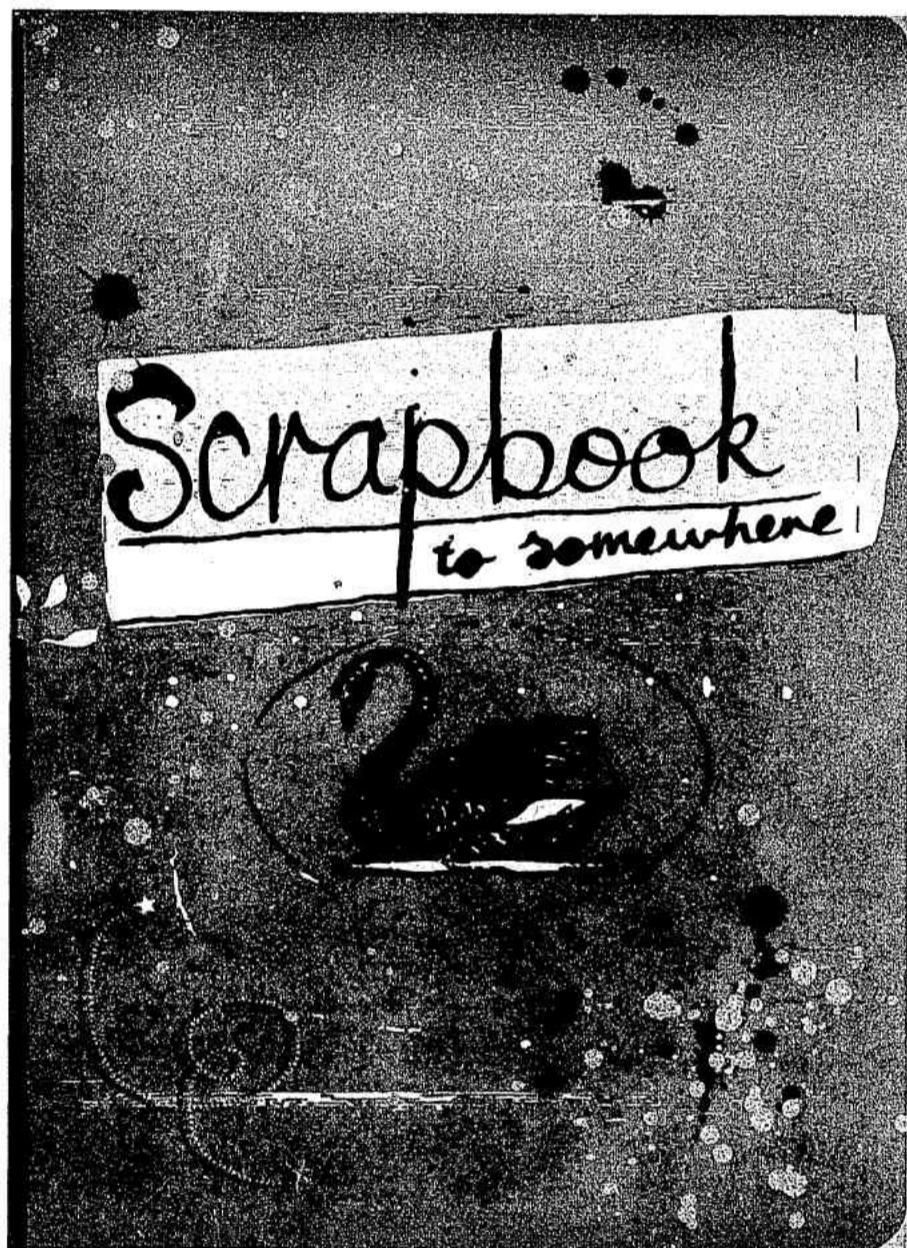
Contact Equity and Diversity staff at Building 18, North Rd.

Email: EquityandDiversity@anu.edu.au

Tel: 6125 3595; 6125 3868

Web: www.anu.edu.au/equity

Mag Page



Cover and page 92 of *Scrapbook to Somewhere*.
Edited by Lou Smith and Eve Vincent, design by
Tom Civil. Published late 2004 by Breakdown.

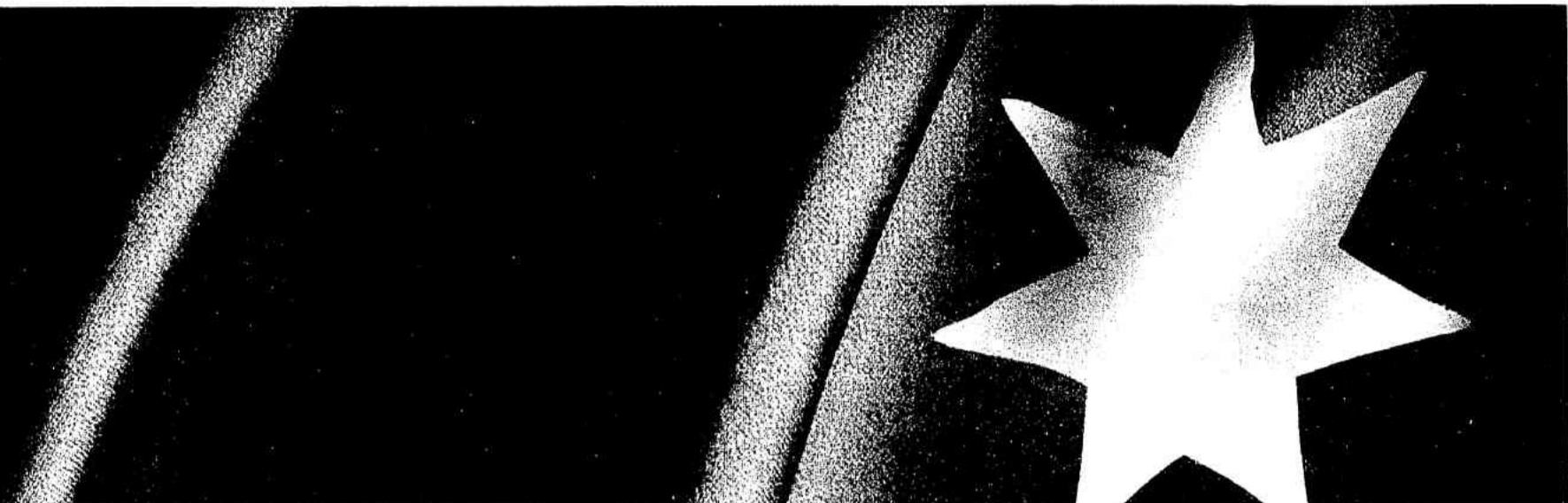


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Graduate Coursework Information Evening

Tuesday 11th October - 5.30pm to 8pm
University House, The Hall, Balmain Crescent, ANU



This information evening will provide an excellent opportunity to prospective students to find out about Australia's top university and the range of graduate coursework programs it offers. All areas represented will have an information booth where prospective students can ask academics and general staff about their programs. There will also be the opportunity to listen to talks and presentations about particular programs.

ANU representatives from the following areas will be attending:

- Arts & Social Sciences
- Asia Pacific College of Diplomacy
- Asia Pacific School of Economics & Government
- Business & Economics
- Demography
- International Affairs
- Strategy & Defence
- Faculty of Asian Studies
- Faculty of Engineering & Information Technology
- Faculty of Law
- Faculty of Science
- Academic Skills & Learning Centre
- Careers Centre
- Graduate School
- Student Recruitment & International Education
- Postgraduate & Research Students' Association (PARSA)

For a schedule of presentations, go to www.anu.edu.au/graduate

To register your interest please e-mail rsvp.grad@anu.edu.au

For general enquiries phone 02 6125 2350 or e-mail miriam.ross@anu.edu.au